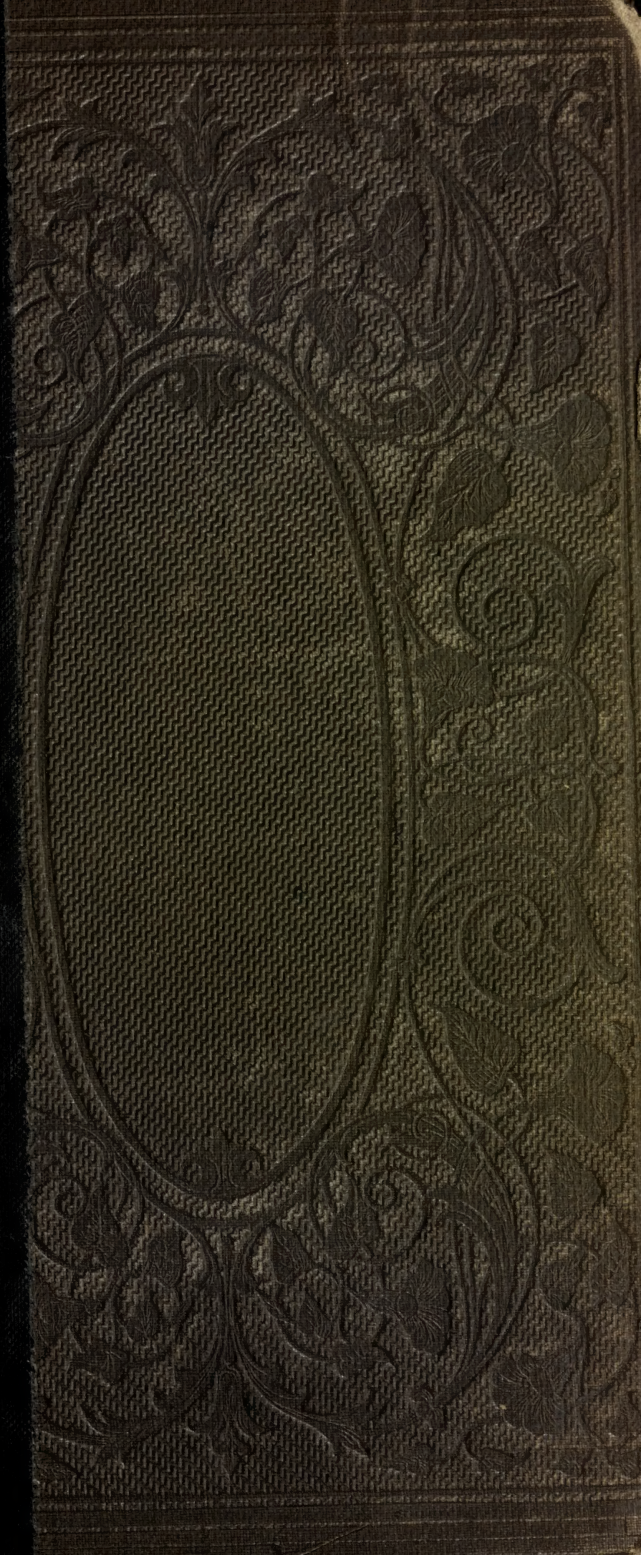




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PROFESSOR J. S. WILL



HISTORY
OF
WESLEYAN METHODISM.

VOL. III.
MODERN METHODISM.

BY GEORGE SMITH, LL.D., F.A.S.,

MEMBER OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY,
OF THE ROYAL SOCIETY OF LITERATURE, ETC., ETC.

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TO
THE REVEREND WILLIAM W. STAMP,

PRESIDENT OF THE WESLEYAN CONFERENCE, 1860-61,

THIS THIRD AND CONCLUDING VOLUME OF THE

HISTORY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM

IS MOST RESPECTFULLY AND AFFECTIONATELY

Inscribed,

AS AN EXPRESSION OF SINCERE RESPECT

FOR HIS PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CHARACTER,

AND OF DEVOTED ATTACHMENT

TO THAT BODY OF CHRISTIAN MINISTERS

OVER WHOM HE SO ABLY AND SO HONOURABLY PRESIDES,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

June 21st, 1861.

PREFACE.

IN placing the third and concluding volume of Wesleyan Methodist History before "the Connexion" and the public, the author has but little to add to the statements prefixed to the preceding volumes. He has been guided by the same principles, and actuated by the same spirit, as he then announced.

The friends already named as having contributed assistance to the author in the preceding volumes, have generally continued to do so in this instance ; and to them his renewed and most grateful thanks are respectfully presented. The author is happy now to add the names of the Rev. W. Lord, the Rev. C. Tucker, and Francis Herbert, Esq., of Chelsea, from whom he has received important documentary and other information. He also feels called on specially to acknowledge the important aid rendered by the Rev. John Kirk in compiling the Index.

The difficulties naturally incident to a work of this kind have been greatly aggravated, in the period treated of in this volume, by the animosities and divisions which took place in the Connexion. But, laborious and perplexing as the duty has been, the author has endeavoured to perform his task with Christian charity and fidelity. To the utmost of his power, consistently with the

principles of Christian truth, and his obligations to an important section of the Church of Christ, he has endeavoured to avoid giving pain to any. If these efforts have failed,—if any expression of unnecessary harshness is found,—it will be most sincerely regretted. He has honestly endeavoured to speak the “truth in love.”

It was said by some who honoured the first volume with notice, that it was “as fair an account of Methodism as could be expected from a partisan.” To this insinuation the author replies, that he unhesitatingly pleads guilty to a deep and vital interest in Methodism, and a cordial approval of its principles and economy. But he is not aware that this has disqualified him for being its historian. He has never heard it urged that a loyal and devoted Englishman is unfit to write a History of England, or a patriotic Frenchman the History of France. But if by this expression it is intended to convey a suspicion that the author has sacrificed truth to partiality, he most emphatically denies the allegation. Neither by expression nor suppression has he done any thing of the kind, and he confidently appeals to the whole work as his justification.

The object avowed at the outset—“to present a faithful account of Wesleyan Methodism, avoiding the disparagement of any person or party,” to give “a brief but full, a friendly but faithful,” exhibition of Wesleyan Methodism from the beginning—has been steadily kept in view, and it is hoped has, in some measure, been accomplished.

But whatever verdict the Connexion or the public may pronounce on the effort now brought to a conclusion, the author, while repeating his acknowledg-

ments to the many kind friends who have assisted him, again declares, that the entire responsibility is his own. He has spared neither labour nor cost in obtaining the best information; but the judgment pronounced is always his own unbiassed decision. In no instance has he been the organ of any man or any party:— he has expressed his own honest convictions without fear or favour.

Thankful to a merciful and gracious God for the preservation which has enabled him to complete this arduous task, after having been brought to the margin of the grave during its preparation for the press, the author dedicates the result of his labours to the Wesleyan Methodists throughout the world, and to the evangelistic interests of the coming age, with earnest prayers that it may be blessed and made a blessing.

TREVU, CAMBORNE,
June 21st, 1861.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN presenting a carefully revised Edition of the third volume of his work to the Christian public, the Author has simply to observe that he has exerted himself to the utmost of his ability to render it worthy of general acceptance and approval.

Numerous emendations have been made, matters of secondary importance have been transferred to the Appendix or placed in Notes, and some new and important information has been introduced. The volume has not only been improved in its general arrangement and appearance, but also rendered more accurate and complete.

The Indices have participated in this careful revision and extensive improvement; and are now adapted to the Second Edition of the whole work. It is hoped they will be found useful to all students of Wesleyan History.

The author cannot finally commit the work on which he has spent great labour for several years, and which has called forth intense solicitude and anxiety, to the Church and the world, without repeating his thanks to all the friends by whom he has been generously and efficiently assisted, and imploring the blessing of Heaven on his well-meant and honestly executed History.

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HISTORY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM.

BOOK VII.

THE HISTORY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM FROM THE
CONFERENCE OF 1816 TO THAT OF 1832.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1816 TO THAT OF 1832.

ENTERING upon the third and concluding volume of our history, we have a starting-point very different from that which marked the beginning of each of the preceding volumes.

In the first, we had not only to trace the origin of Methodism, but likewise of the Wesleys, and to show the agency through whose exertions, under God, the Connexion arose into existence. Nor was the case very different at the commencement of the second volume. The Wesleys had then been removed to their reward. The Founder and Father of the Body was taken away. The mind that ruled paramount in all its progress had departed. The community was left as an orphan in the world, with no recognised individual head, with no rational hope of maintaining its position, and continuing its progress, except through special and powerful providential inter-

position. The problem had to be solved, whether Wesley had reared up and left behind him a band of ministers so united in opinion and judgment as to remain one compact body, and sufficiently pious to maintain an extensive godly influence over the Societies, and to secure those continued revelations of grace from heaven, without which no religious community can live and grow.

The solution of this problem is contained in our second volume. Harassed by persecution from without, injured by occasional instances of insubordination and unfaithfulness, Methodism was not destroyed. The numerous predictions of its approaching ruin were falsified. It did not become a chaos, nor merge into the Established Church, nor break up into independent Churches. It remained an important section of the Church of Christ. Nay, more, it grew and multiplied. When Wesley died, he left, as we have seen, seventy-one thousand six hundred and sixty-eight members in Great Britain and Ireland; and at the close of the second volume there were in those Societies two hundred and eleven thousand and sixty-three,—an increase of one hundred and thirty-nine thousand three hundred and ninety-five in the twenty-five years.

But this numerical enlargement is by far the least important feature of the grand advance which the Connexion had made. Not only had it become a united and consolidated Body, of large dimensions and important influence; it had also extended the range of its teaching and evangelizing effort to every quarter of the globe.

When, therefore, we resume our history in this our concluding volume, we find the Connexion trebled in numbers, and much improved in organization and influence. Much as we venerate, and highly as we esteem, the men who, taught in the school of Wesley, took charge of

Methodism at his death, and, under the direction of Divine Providence, bravely and wisely guided it through all the storms and dangers by which it was assailed; yet we cannot be insensible of the fact, that, at this time, there were Methodist ministers of a superior order of mind; men of great intellectual and administrative ability, of vast and varied learning, who, from their action and character, gave the community a prominence and position at home and abroad, which it had never previously obtained.

In the days of Wesley a man of wealth and influence occasionally attached himself to Methodism. But now a numerous and highly respectable laity had grown up in the Connexion. Many sons of Methodist laymen, entering on the business of life under favourable circumstances, and the influence of religious principles, increased in wealth and position, and by their number, character, and station, gave the Body a status in public estimation which it had not previously attained.

In these advanced circumstances we resume our History for another twenty-five years; and the present volume shows, how, starting from such vantage-ground, Methodism held on its way, "waxing stronger and stronger."

The Conference of 1816 was held in London, and began July twenty-ninth. The Rev. Richard Reece was appointed president, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting secretary. There was an increase in the number of Circuits, ministers, and members in Great Britain and on all the Mission Stations, but a small decrease of members in Ireland.*

The Confer-
ence of
1816: its
transactions.

Permission for making collections, within prescribed limits, for more than one hundred chapels, shows that the

* Full details of the progress of the Connexion in these respects are given in a tabular form at the end of this volume. See Appendix A.

Connexion still suffered severe financial embarrassment, in consequence of the erection and enlargement of numerous places of worship. The extensive additions which the detailed accounts of the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools made to the Annual Minutes being found inconvenient, the Conference decided that a separate Report, to be presented to every annual subscriber of ten shillings, should be published, containing a full statement of the public collections, private subscriptions, and expenditure. Some important arrangements were made respecting the Book-Room, and a new monthly periodical, the "Youth's Instructor," was commenced. This useful miscellany held on its way with varied success until 1855.

During the preceding year, an event had taken place which to this day stands alone in the history of Methodism. Seventy-one elections to the presidential chair of the Methodist Conference have taken place since the death of Wesley, and fifty-one different ministers have been appointed to that important duty; yet it is somewhat remarkable that, although these have generally passed the meridian of life, only one of their number has died during the period of office. The Rev. John Barber, after labouring in the Lord's vineyard thirty-five years, was removed both from the ministry and the presidency by a sudden, but peaceful and happy, death, on April twenty-eighth, 1816. This solemn occurrence led the Conference to make arrangements for obviating the inconveniences occasioned by the death of a president during his year of office. It was resolved that the last surviving president should immediately enter upon the office so vacated, and be regarded as invested with all its powers, privileges, and authority, until a successor should be appointed at the ensuing Conference.

Employment was scarce, wages were low, and the price of provisions enormously high. Early in July, while the Conference was in session, it was ascertained that the harvest would be a general failure; and as there had not been sufficient time, since the establishment of peace, for any important extension of commerce, the country sank into general despondency and gloomy discontent.

The funds of Methodism naturally felt the influence of this general pressure. Nearly two thousand pounds had been added to the public debt of the Connexion in the past year, and the whole deficiency was above five thousand pounds. The preachers saw the absolute necessity of reducing this heavy liability; but, knowing the difficulties which pressed on all classes, they determined to take the whole debt, rather than make any extraordinary call upon the Societies, at such a season of severe depression. There happened to be a very large stock in the Book-Room, which the pressure of the times rendered, to a great extent, unsaleable. A portion of this stock was made available, and in the accounts presented to the next Conference these entries are found: "Cash received from six hundred and eighty-four preachers, for books taken at their own risk, £3,420;" and, "Amount of usual claims voluntarily relinquished by about three hundred preachers, £2,600." By these means, above six thousand pounds were provided by the Methodist ministry alone, and, in many instances, at extreme personal sacrifice, to meet the urgent claims of the Connexion.

In spite of the gloomy appearance of the country, and the financial embarrassments of the home work, the preachers were so cheered with the success resulting from the improved organization introduced into the Missionary Societies, that they resolved to send twenty-six additional missionaries into the foreign field. One of these was to

Generous effort of the preachers to pay off the public debt.

Great increase in the number of missionaries.

supply the place of Mr. Ault, who died in Ceylon; two others to fill up vacancies occasioned by the removal of missionaries from Newfoundland; and two to supply similar vacancies in Nevis and Tortola. The remaining twenty-one were a clear addition to the number of missionaries.

It is impossible to withhold the meed of high approbation from a body of Christian ministers, who, while struggling with serious financial difficulties, which could only be met by great personal sacrifices, thus nobly entered into the great missionary enterprise, and dared so much for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in heathen lands.

Rev. Daniel
Isaac's "Ec-
clesiastical
Claims" cen-
sured by the
Conference.

One act of this assembly excited considerable attention, and is not without significance, as an important element of Methodist history; the pronunciation of a solemn censure on the Rev. Daniel Isaac's "Ecclesiastical Claims." * As the author was a minister of more than ordinary ability and energy, and the book treated of a subject which, on account of the extravagant claims put forth by some of the clergy, and their general intolerance towards Methodism, was very popular, this measure was regarded by many as unjustly severe. A reference to the work itself is, however, quite sufficient to justify the course taken by the Conference. In many important respects, the work does great credit to the author's industry and research. It contains

* "Resolved. That the Conference approve of the conduct of the Book Committee in London, in having refused to facilitate the circulation of a book on 'Ecclesiastical Claims,' which was printed in Scotland, and published by a member of our Connexion; and deem it a public duty to declare, in the fear of God, their most decided disapprobation of various passages contained in that book, as well as of the general spirit and style of it, which the Conference believe to be unbecoming and unchristian."—"Minutes," 8vo. Edit., vol. iv., p. 234.

the most convincing proofs, from Scripture and history, of the groundless character of the extravagant claims put forth, on behalf of the ministerial order, by Papists and High Churchmen; and clearly shows the contradictions, impieties, and absurdities, to which the admission of these claims inevitably leads. But Mr. Isaac went so far as to impugn the scriptural position of the Christian ministry, as held by Wesley and the Methodist people. Nor is this the only serious defect in the book. Some passages are grossly indelicate and irreverent, if not indeed profane; whilst its "general spirit and style" are decidedly improper. An intelligent reader would be fully prepared to expect this from the last paragraph of the preface:—"Some readers will, perhaps, blame the author for not writing with perfect calmness and gravity. The fact is, he has a great dislike to writing controversy; and, as the subject was unpleasant, it may possibly have had an unhappy influence upon his temper." He then compares the assailants of Methodism to barking curs, whose noise may be endured, but who must be indignantly kicked away when they attempt to bite. "Bigots have been long barking, and he took no notice of them; but as of late they have attempted to bite, it became necessary to chastise their folly; but it was neither easy, nor necessary, to do this with much sweetness of temper. Persecution is a furious, impudent fiend, which cannot be driven away with a few fine, soft words. The language of these sheets, however, is courtly, when compared with the anti-Methodistical publications of the day. Till the enemies of the sectaries learn better manners, they must submit to a little rough usage: 'a whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back.'"

The spirit and manner for which these sentences were

intended to apologize are quite unsuitable to the gravity of the subject, and ill adapted to secure the object of the author, as well as unchristian, and therefore unbecoming a Christian minister. Intemperance of spirit and language is never an element of power, but of weakness. Many of Mr. Isaac's weighty arguments are neutralized; much of his strong sense is discredited, by the sarcasm, levity, and flippancy of language with which they stand connected. It cannot be denied that the teaching, example, and spirit of Christ are altogether opposed to everything of this kind, and the Conference were, therefore, justified in coming to the resolution found on their Minutes.

The effect of this judgment on the mind of Mr. Isaac was not such as could have been desired. He published a defence, of twenty pages, which was distinguished by the same faults as his book,—levity, sarcasm, and flippancy. Even his partial biographer is constrained to admit that he treated “the Conference with very little respect, and some of his brethren with too much levity and severity.” The same authority also writes: “This was the *beginning of evil days* with this excellent man; and a degree of estrangement of mind was produced between himself and the Conference, together with some of his brethren, injurious to himself and to the church of God.”

Mr. Isaac's ability, energy, and sterling worth, are fully admitted; and it is equally clear, from a careful perusal of the work, that the Conference were not only justified in the course they pursued, but compelled to that course by the circumstances of the case. On the minor questions imported into the controversy, whether Mr. Isaac should have been sent for to attend the Conference, or whether any milder form of recording judgment should have been adopted, it is not necessary to express an opinion.

The persevering efforts of Methodist missionaries to evangelize the Negro slaves in the West India Islands, had been attended with abundant success. Great numbers had been brought to a saving knowledge of the Gospel, and were walking worthy of the Christian character. The missionaries, under a deep sense of religious responsibility, and in obedience to express injunctions from the general Committee, carefully abstained from mooted questions connected with the foul nature and abominable results of slavery. But it was clearly perceived by the planters and others, that if the Negroes were instructed and elevated by sound moral and religious culture, they could not be perpetually retained in bondage and degradation. They could not be driven to the shambles, bought and sold like sheep or oxen; wives could not be torn from their husbands, children from their parents, and females of every age and condition exposed to the lust of cruel and brutal drivers, or of licentious and scarcely less cruel overseers. But unfortunately, instead of acknowledging the power of the meliorating influences, and devising means to relax, in a corresponding measure, the institutions of slavery, that the Negroes might be gradually prepared to conduct themselves as Christian citizens, and then permitted to enjoy the privileges of citizenship, the planters pursued the opposite course. Yet there cannot exist a reasonable doubt that such a relaxation and preparation of the slaves for freedom was the political, moral, and religious duty of all the colonial authorities; and if it was not the pecuniary interest of the planters, the reason must have been that they had, with flagrant injustice, trampled on the natural rights of their fellow-men, and robbed them of that which was made the means of most iniquitous gain.

Great success of missionary labour among the Negro slaves in the West Indies.

Not only did the "West India interest" fail to recog-

nise the beneficial influence of missionary teaching, or to make any change for the better in the treatment of their slaves; but they regarded the labours of the missionaries as antagonistic to their interests, and opposed them with all their might. Being unable to prevent the slaves attending religious services, they endeavoured to ruin the reputation of the missionaries in the estimation of the British public. Possessing wealth and influence, they had great facilities for effecting this object, while their zeal was equal to their means. In Parliament, in the periodical press, and in pamphlets, the missionaries were misrepresented, vilified, and held up to general scorn and reprobation. Grown bold by successful slander, they proceeded to yet greater lengths in reckless falsehoods. In June, 1816, Mr. Barham, M.P. for Stockbridge, asserted in the House of Commons, that the Methodist missionaries in the West Indies, under a mask of religion, inculcated principles of sedition, taught disobedience to masters, and encouraged among the Negroes those delusive and pernicious ideas which led in one instance to open insurrection, and in others to a prevailing state of agitation and discontent.

Attacks
made on
Missionaries
in Parlia-
ment re-
pelled by
Mr. Butter-
worth

It was impossible for the Methodist Missionary Committee to overlook such very grave allegations. They directed the Rev. James Wood, one of their treasurers, to apply to the honourable member, and request the names of the missionaries who had so misconducted themselves, assuring him that such conduct was in direct opposition to the instructions which the missionaries had received, and which they had pledged themselves to observe. Mr. Barham refused to give any explanation or information, except in the House of Commons. The Committee then requested Mr. Butterworth, one of their number, who had a seat in the House, to bring the subject before Par-

liament. Mr. Barham confessed his inability to specify names, times, or circumstances; admitting that he had heard such reports concerning persons called Methodist missionaries; but who they were, or to what particular denomination they belonged, he did not know. Mr. Butterworth, having attained his object, withdrew his motion at the request of Lord Castlereagh, the government leader of the House, who declared, in behalf of the ministry, that there lay no charge against the missionaries who had been so harshly censured.

Notwithstanding this signal failure, the enemies of missions were determined to pursue their object. Mr. Marryat, another member of Parliament, distinguished himself by a series of similar attacks on the Methodist missionaries; and a host of anonymous scribblers, in different periodicals, contributed to the same object. This aggression became so violent and extensive, as to call for some adequate and decisive defence. A wide-spread and very injurious impression had been made on the public mind, and an antidote equally potent was required to preserve the mission cause from deep and lasting injury. It is not the least of the distinguished providential interpositions on behalf of Methodism, that at this juncture there was introduced into connexion with the Missionary Society a man every way qualified for this necessary and important service. At the Conference of 1816, the Rev. Richard Watson, in conjunction with the Rev. George Marsden, was appointed secretary to the Missionary Committee. When, therefore, this storm of opposition was raised, and it was attempted to cry down missions and missionaries by argument and ridicule, all eyes were turned to Watson as the man to interpose in their defence. He published "A Defence of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions in the West Indies," containing

Successful
defence of
Wesleyan
Missions by
Watson.

a complete reply to the arguments, allegations, and calumnies which had produced such an injurious effect upon the public mind.

Watson was well prepared for his task, having access to the extensive correspondence between the secretaries and the missionaries in the West Indies. He addressed a circular to each of the ten missionaries returned from that field of labour who were then in England; and important evidence was collected. Watson showed that, before the arrival of the missionaries, the Negroes in general had scarcely the slightest conception of religion in any form; that they had no Sabbath; were almost entire strangers to the marriage relation; and that the clergy residing on the islands did not regard them as any part of their charge. He proved, beyond the possibility of contradiction, "that by means of missionary labour many thousands of these degraded people had been raised to a character of purity, loyalty, and happiness, enduring the evils of slavery 'with a glad heart and free,' enjoying the blessings of Christianity both in life and in death."

This noble effort afforded the friends and supporters of West Indian missions a ground of honest triumph and congratulation. "Never was a defence of a religious cause more complete." The work was extensively read and appreciated by Members of Parliament, and other influential persons. Wilberforce expressed his approbation of it in strong terms. Marryat was silenced, and ever after treated the Methodists with courtesy and respect.

Happy results of this controversy.

But the effects of this literary warfare were far more extensive and lasting than the most sanguine friend of the Negro could have hoped. Before the controversy arose, every effort, consistent with Christian fidelity, was made to conciliate the planters and the colonial authorities in the

West Indies. Missionary success was scarcely looked for but through their tolerance and forbearance. Nothing was said or published calculated to offend or annoy those who were regarded as possessing such a fearful amount of power. Watson was, however, compelled to give, in his defence, some instances of the terrible cruelties inflicted on the Negroes, and to cast some light on the horrors of that condition to which slavery had reduced them. These revelations awakened strong feelings, and turned the eyes of Christian philanthropists toward the West India Islands, with a degree of sympathetic interest never before felt.

The missions in the East were carried on with increasing vigour. In Ceylon, the labours of the missionaries were appreciated by the highest authorities. Some question having arisen as to the legality of the marriages which they performed, the governor promptly issued a proclamation, declaring all such marriages legal. He forwarded to each missionary a regular licence, which enabled him to perform all such services in future in a manner which removed all doubt as to their validity. Sir Alexander Johnstone, the honourable chief justice of the island, and his excellent lady, also gave their cordial advice and patronage to the missionaries in the establishment of schools; a measure by which their sphere of usefulness was greatly enlarged. In this work they found access to the heathen mind in its most teachable state; and in many instances sowed the seeds of eternal life in the rising generation.

Prosperity
of missions
in the East.

The power of spiritual religion was exemplified in the Methodist Societies at home with unabated energy. The Rev. William Appleton, a young minister, preached at Luton three times, and administered the sacrament, on

Happy death
of Rev. Mr.
Appleton,
and of Mr.
Yolland.

Sunday, June first. The next morning, in passing through St. Alban's for London in a one-horse carriage, the horse, by a sudden motion of his head, drew the reins out of his hand. In jumping out of the carriage to recover them, Mr. Appleton broke his leg, dislocated his ankle, and died in three weeks. He endured the agonies of pain,—occasioned by reducing the joint and setting the broken bone,—although most intense, with unmoved patience; and throughout his illness his soul was full of God. A friend who sat up with him, about a fortnight after the accident, observed: "Such was the ecstasy and joy of our dear brother Appleton through the whole of the night, that while I felt, I could not but wonder. I can say, I never spent such a night of prayer and praise in my life; nor ever did I hear one person speak so much of the glory of God; and in such exalted language as is impossible for me to repeat." God had been preparing him for this affliction. The night before his death, he exclaimed, "Glory be to Him that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever! Glory be to the Father, for His mercy and grace manifested to us! Glory be to God the Son, who hath redeemed us by His most precious blood! Glory be to God the Holy Ghost, the Sanctifier! O ye angels of light, assist me to praise Him! O, what glory, what glory, what glory is this!" *

The death of a pious layman, if less ecstatic, was equally satisfactory. Mr. Yolland, a native of Devonshire, went to London in 1796. He was there during the great political and infidel struggles and excitement caused by the French Revolution, and narrowly escaped the moral ruin which engulfed thousands. A friend persuaded him to attend City Road chapel; and there, under the ministry

* "Minutes," vol. iv., p. 294.

of Atmore and Pawson, he was brought to the knowledge of salvation. He devoted himself with great diligence to the service of God. His attention to prayer-meetings and Sunday schools, in the most destitute parts of the metropolis, was intense and unwearied. He died May twenty-eighth, 1817. One who was his intimate friend writes : "I visited him constantly in his sickness, and was with him when he died. He was never, I believe, favoured with that degree of ecstasy with which some have expressed themselves at the approach of death, and in the prospect of heaven. But his experience was no less characteristic of one who was called of God, justified and sanctified by the blood and Spirit of Christ, and who possessed an unshaken confidence in the faithfulness of his heavenly Father, to whom he was reconciled by faith in the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin." *

But no amount of evangelizing power among the heathen abroad ; no philanthropic efforts to meliorate the condition of the down-trodden slave ; no zeal and success in the ministration of the Gospel at home, could so far avail in the eyes of Christian zealots in the Church of England, as to reconcile them to Methodism, its continued existence and prosperity. Contemporary with the events just recorded, were many violent attacks made on the Connexion, denouncing it as deeply sinful in its origin, object, and end. The Rev. Richard Lyne, rector of Little Petherick, Cornwall, declared that Wesley bore "too much resemblance to Simon Magus." But while this reverend author selects the Methodists as the principal objects of attack, he includes all separatists from the Established Church within the range of his denunciations. A few of his statements will show that extreme High-Church intolerance is not of

High-
Church
intolerance
exemplified.

* "Wesleyan Magazine" for 1817, p. 848.

recent growth :—" How ridiculous, as well as wicked, must it be, not to deem ourselves bound and limited to those means of access to God ; for example, the rites and ceremonies of the Church of England ! " " On Dissenters, in whose country there is a true national Christian church lawfully, that is to say, by God's ordinary providence, established, I solemnly charge the horrible sin of idolatry, be their doctrines never so Christianly, their worship never so devout, their rites never so beseeeming, and however grave and solemnized their carriage." Again, " All the most Christian-like sectarian worship will stand abhorred by God to everlasting ages." " In this country schismatical religious rites are in their institution offensive to Almighty God, and abhorred by Him ; and no words can express their sin and uncleanness ; no reflections too severe, no name too opprobrious, can be cast upon them." In this manner were all Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists, Moravians, and Quakers, as well as Methodists, denounced by High-Church clergymen in 1817.

Disputes
respecting
the adminis-
tration of
the sacra-
ments in
Ireland.

Disputes and agitation respecting the administration of the sacraments, which, after a long and painful controversy, were settled in England in 1795, arose in Ireland twenty years later. When the controversy occurred in England, the work had not attained such maturity and extent in the sister island as to call for any alteration of Wesley's primitive practice. At the Dublin Conference, in 1796, the year after the Plan of Pacification was adopted in England, the question was asked, " Is it expedient, in the present state of the Irish Connexion, to adopt the Rules of Pacification ? " The answer was, " It is not expedient at present." *

The great rebellion, and its terrible results to Methodism

* SMITH'S " Methodism in Ireland," p. 79.

and to the country at large, caused a decrease in the Irish Societies for two successive years. The subject of the sacraments, however, did not attract general attention until after the Conference of 1813. Early in the following year, the question of petitioning the Conference on the subject was freely discussed. When the Conference met, petitions were presented, and a motion submitted, "That the request of the petitioners be now granted; and that from henceforth we will administer the ordinances of the Gospel to such of the Societies as require them." This resolution was carried by a majority of ten, and the subject was regarded by the advocates of the measure as settled. On bringing up the report, the following morning, however, the minority proposed, "That the operation of the vote of our last sitting be suspended for one year, and a conciliatory letter sent to those Circuits which had petitioned for the ordinances." After a very earnest debate, this measure, from its apparent moderation, was carried.

The results of this decision were most deplorable. The hopes raised by the first resolution were so totally destroyed by the second, that the Societies were thrown into violent commotion, in which the Dublin Leaders' Meeting took the lead, in opposition to the administration of the sacraments. "In most Circuits, public meetings were held, and printed resolutions and addresses forwarded through the land; many of them hostile to the scriptural and conscientious demands of their brethren. These led to counter resolutions, sometimes from the same places, and to decided and strong declarations from those Circuit which were favourable to the admission of the ordinances: only a few were of a conciliatory and moderate description." *

* Matthew Lanktree.

Deplorable
agitation
which this
controversy
occasioned.

As the decision of the Irish Conference only deferred compliance with petitions of great numbers of the people, specifically for one year, the ensuing twelve months was a season of intense agitation and excitement throughout the Societies. Those who desired to receive the sacraments from the preachers, prepared petitions of greater number and weight for the next annual assembly; those of opposite opinions prepared protests and demands for the maintenance of the established order of things, in great numbers; while, by meetings, circulars, and appeals, both parties did their utmost to influence the public mind. When the Conference of 1815 assembled, the numerous petitions in favour of the administration of the sacraments, couched in language at once respectful, urgent, and affectionate, were first read; and afterward those of the objectors, also very numerous, and of a very miscellaneous character. "A Remonstrance from the Dublin Leaders," engrossed on a vast roll of parchment, was presented to the Conference by the venerable Arthur Keene, accompanied by several of the most respectable office-bearers of that city. The result of the discussion was, a resolution, "That an affectionate letter be sent to the petitioners, saying that Mr. Averell will meet their wants as far as possible."* This decision was a fatal stroke to those who petitioned for the administration of the sacraments. It dashed their hopes to the ground, and was intended to perpetuate the practice of Irish Methodism as it had been in the days of Wesley.

The Rev. Adam Averell, named in the resolution, was a pious member of the Established Church, in deacon's orders. He had attached himself to Wesley, and, having some property, laboured as a Methodist preacher without

* See the letter, Appendix B.

receiving any pecuniary consideration. He was a most earnest opponent of the petitioners for the sacraments, and deprecated the change which so many of the Methodists eagerly desired. He considered that the vocation of Methodism was to infuse spiritual life into all Protestant churches; that the Societies should be composed of such members of the National, Presbyterian, and other Churches, as Methodist preaching might bring under special religious influence. He desired, therefore, that such persons should communicate in their respective churches, still remaining members of the Methodist Societies for spiritual instruction and edification. If the sacraments were administered by Methodist preachers, the character of Methodism would be thereby entirely changed: the members of other churches meeting in Society would be obliged to make their election between their own church and Methodism: and it was argued, that to give a church status to Methodism would destroy its proper character and usefulness.

But these arguments, cogent as they seemed, and supported as they were by many pious and highly respectable men, could not effectually check the efforts to obtain the ardently desired change. This desire did not merely arise out of an opinion, or rest upon reasoning: it was the result of a wide-spread, deeply-felt religious necessity. Whatever might be said as to the case of members of other churches, who had been brought under religious influence by Methodist preaching, it was an undoubted fact, that there were thousands of devoted persons who had never known any religious instructors or pastors but Methodist preachers. These yearned for the privilege of communion; and to be sent to ministers whom they knew not, and to places of worship which they never attended, was equivalent to a harsh refusal of the rightful privilege.

The decision of Conference, therefore, precipitated the crisis which the opponents of change were so anxious to avert. The Irish Connexion was in a state of great excitement and confusion, each party sternly anxious to secure its object. At length, a course was taken by some of the petitioners for the sacraments, which no one appears to have anticipated. At the earnest request of the people, several of the preachers who had strongly supported these petitions broke through the prohibition of the Conference, and administered the Lord's Supper to the Societies at Ballyclough, in Armagh, Newry, and different Circuits. Mr. Averell was anxious that discipline should be exercised on the violators of Conference regulation, and especially on the first offender. He accordingly wrote to Mr. Lanktree's superintendent, requiring him to have his colleague tried by the District, and put away from the body of preachers. The superintendent refused; and Mr. Lanktree continued his usual course of labours. In this sad condition of division and conflict the Irish Methodists remained during that connexional year.

At the opening of the Conference of 1816, the ferment was at its highest point. What was to be done with respect to the preachers who had violated the express enactment of Conference? and, Were any new or amended regulations to be adopted in regard to the administration of the sacraments? were the grand questions for consideration and decision.

Happily for the interests of religion, Dr. Adam Clarke—a man of great wisdom, deep piety, and large experience—was president of the Irish Conference. The preachers arraigned for violation of connexional order, were Messrs. Lanktree, Stephenson, Steele, Cranston, T. Johnson, W. Hamilton, T. Ker, and J. Johnson. The brethren were

heard in their defence, and severally pleaded that they were induced to act as they did through the pressing importunity of the people, and the religious necessity which they apprehended in the case. It was resolved, that "Brothers Lanktree, Stephenson, Steele, T. Johnson, and Cranston be reprehended, and also judged ineligible to fill the office of secretary of the Conference and chairmen of Districts for the coming year." In addition to this censure, Ker, Hamilton, and J. Johnson, who were believed to have been placed in circumstances much less peculiar, pressing, and difficult, than the others, were declared to be ineligible to fill the office of superintendent for the year.

The occurrences of the year, and the painful circumstances into which the Conference were now brought, induced a great change in the views of a leading preacher in the Irish Connexion. Mr. Tobias had formerly given his vote, character, and influence to Mr. Averell, in opposition to the prayer of the petitioners. He was, however, now so deeply affected by the wide-spread feeling in favour of these claims, that he boldly declared his altered views, and insisted that something must be done, and that without delay, to meet their religious necessities. The subject was ably discussed in a long and earnest debate; and a resolution for acceding to the prayer of the petitioners was carried by a majority of sixty-two against twenty-six.

Settlement
of the ques-
tion, and re-
sults of the
struggle.

But although those who demanded the administration of the sacrament had obtained their object, they consented to receive the privilege subject to guards and restrictions which showed a Christian deference for their brethren who differed from them in judgment. It was enacted, "that the sacraments shall not be granted to any Circuit, but with the consent (signified in writing to the Conference) of two-thirds of the stewards and leaders of such Circuit,

being duly assembled in a Quarterly Meeting ;” and that “it shall not be administered in any chapel, but with the consent (signified in writing to the Conference) of two-thirds of the stewards, leaders, and trustees of such chapel, duly summoned for that purpose.” These and other regulations for preventing discord and promoting the work of God were carefully drawn up and placed on the Minutes; and an elaborate as well as “Affectionate Address” from the Conference to the people, signed by the president and secretary, was freely circulated.*

On this decision of the Conference being declared, Dr. Clarke delivered a very able and animated address, occupying two hours, in which he pointed out the congruity of the proposed change with the plans and purpose of Wesley; and showed that since a similar course had been adopted by the English Conference, the Connexion had increased from year to year in numbers and religious prosperity. “I will not,” said he, “make invidious comparisons between the Methodists of England and Ireland; in both, they are the children of my God and Father; but this I will say, from perfect acquaintance with the subject, that they have, in England, incomparably more grace and more stability since the introduction of the sacrament than before.” For the purpose of refuting charges which had been circulated against the preachers, Dr. Clarke added, “I have had access to the inmost archives of state, where their characters were properly appreciated. I have had a particular conversation with Lord Sidmouth and Mr. Perceval, in which they spoke most honourably of the utility of the Irish preachers in the time of rebellion. It is well known they have been bulwarks to the Church against the attacks of Popery and other enemies.”

* Appendix C,—Irish Plan of Pacification.

Yet neither the prudent counsels of the president, nor the collective wisdom and authority of the Conference, embodied in the Address, nor the judicious advices of pious and moderate ministers in both parties, could prevent the greatest excitement and agitation. Great numbers, in many Circuits, who opposed the administration of the sacraments, refused to receive those preachers who were believed to be favourable to their introduction. The violence of the defeated party was very great, and the utmost efforts were put forth for the purpose of inducing the ensuing Conference to repeal the enactment. Meetings were held, circulars and addresses issued, and various organizations devised. There were, indeed, in this highly excited period, three parties in Irish Methodism :—1. Those who desired the free administration of the sacraments by the preachers, regarding this privilege as a Christian right, and necessary to give Methodism its proper religious and ecclesiastical position. 2. Those who were determined to adhere to the original object and form of Methodism. These persons, generally members of the Church of England or of Presbyterian Churches, and attending worship, and receiving the sacraments, in their several sanctuaries, regarded the Society as organized for the revival of religion and the edification of those brought under religious influence, and not intended to be, or to resemble, a church in its character or organization. In their view, the organization of Methodism only gave it a subsidiary character. They did not regard their preachers as invested with pastoral authority, or entitled to exercise clerical functions. 3. The other party comprised those who objected to the administration of the sacraments by the preachers, but who did not regard this as a sufficient reason for leaving the Connexion. They protested against the practice, and endea-

voured to put an end to it: but they still retained their membership. The leaders of the Dublin Society—a very influential body—were mostly of this mind, and stood at the head of this section.

The case of
Derry cha-
pel, and de-
cision of the
Master of
the Rolls.

Some of those opposed to the recent decision of the Conference were determined to carry their cause by a high hand. The trustees of the Derry chapel excluded the minister appointed by the Conference, and refused to allow him to preach there, unless he would relinquish all connexion with the Conference, and those that were disposed to submit to it. He refused, and they appointed a Mr. West to officiate, ignoring altogether the appointment of the Conference. The minister and one of his congregation, acting for those who felt the vital importance of the question at issue, petitioned the Lord Chancellor to be restored to the use of the chapel, and that the trustees who had so grievously violated their trust might be removed. The case was referred to the Master of the Rolls. Having obtained a report from the proper officer on the merits of the case, he heard counsel with all the evidence on both sides. After which he delivered a clear and decisive judgment, granting all that the petition requested, restoring the preacher to the use of the chapel, and removing the offending trustees from the office in which they had misconducted themselves; a judgment which exercised a very important influence on the Methodism of Ireland.*

During this period of agitation, when the advocates for the sacraments were severely pressed by hostile influences, they consulted Dr. Clarke, the president for the year, on the subject. The closing paragraph of his reply is worthy of preservation. “Give up the sacrament of the Lord’s Supper, *when* you go to drink the new wine in the kingdom

* See Appendix D.

of God. Let neither fear nor flattery induce you to do it *one moment sooner*. Had you had it twenty years ago, you would have been now doubly more numerous, and doubly more holy. God has broken your chain ; if you heal it, or suffer others to do so, you will have His curse and not His blessing.” *

As the Conference of 1817 approached, those who led the opposition to the recent measures of the Conference prepared for a most determined effort to abrogate the decision of the preceding year. A large number of persons, some delegated by Circuits and Societies, and others moved by their own will, assembled in Dublin, and asked for intercourse with the Conference. The preachers, under the presidency of Richard Reece, anxious for the restoration of peace and harmony, appointed a large and respectable deputation to meet them. Long and frequent conferences took place, but with no satisfactory result. The delegates insisted, as a preliminary condition, “that no Methodist preacher, as such, should, under any circumstances, administer the ordinances of Baptism and the Lord’s Supper to any of our Societies.” Methodist ordination was altogether rejected, and it was insisted that the preachers should have no ministerial *status*. The Conference could not treat on this basis. They therefore maintained their stand, and sent an affectionate Address to the leaders and members of the Societies, explaining their position in relation to the sacramental question, and asserting their singleness of purpose and godly sincerity.

These circumstances led to a serious and lamentable secession, of which Adam Averell became the head. He was the President of the Primitive Wesleyan Conference (for that was the name the seceders adopted) as long as his

* “Biographical Narrative,” by LANKTREE, p. 275.

health permitted. The effect of this continued agitation and secession on the Irish Connexion is seen in the fact that, in three years from 1815, the number of members in Ireland decreased ten thousand three hundred and five, or above one third of the whole.

It is a singular fact, that the character of this secession was so totally unlike that which took place in England from the operation of a similar cause. In this country the agitation respecting the administration of the sacraments, and the ecclesiastical polity of the Connexion, produced a secession far more alien from the Established Church, and much more deeply imbued with the principles of Dissent, than the parent community. In Ireland, the seceders were devoted to the Church ; and one chief ground of their separation was, the alleged invasion of the ministerial office by persons in the unauthorized position of Methodist preachers.

The Conference of 1817: its transactions.

The English Conference of 1817 was held at Sheffield ; the Rev. John Gaulter being president, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting secretary. Collections were, as usual, allowed to be made within certain limits, on behalf of a great number of distressed chapel trusts. But this proceeding had become so very objectionable, that the Conference authorized the president and secretary to invite as many trustees as they might think proper, and a similar number of preachers, to consider the whole subject, immediately before the next Conference, that some well-digested plan might be devised for the relief of deeply involved chapels destitute of local means for meeting their own expenses. It was also arranged that a preliminary assembly should be convened in London for the purpose of preparing the materials for this meeting.

The rapidly extending operations of the Methodist

Missions called for corresponding expansion in the organization of the Society. This had been perceived immediately on the death of Dr. Coke, and some measures were devised to meet the necessity of the case by the General Committee in May, 1814. These were fully adopted by the ensuing Conference, but were afterwards found to be insufficient. The Conference of 1817, having accepted a series of resolutions submitted to it by the Missionary Committee, recorded its approbation of a scheme which was placed on these Minutes as a "Plan of a General Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society;" and requested the executive committee to make such additional arrangements as might be found necessary for perfecting it, and carrying it into full effect. The completed document was adopted by the Conference of 1818, as "Laws and Regulations of the General Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society." These, with some additions and modifications, have remained the established constitution of the association.*

Organiza-
tion of the
Missionary
Society.

Sunday schools had arisen in great numbers in connexion with Wesleyan Societies and congregations, and these well-meant efforts called for judicious ministerial aid and oversight. This Conference accordingly recognised the great "utility and importance" of well-conducted Sunday schools, and urged, as the means of increasing their efficiency, that they should be connected as closely as possible with the church of Christ. It was recommended that the school-hours should be so arranged as not to interfere, more than was absolutely unavoidable, with the punctual attendance of teachers and children on public worship. And to render this recommendation as effectual as possible, Minutes of a preceding year were

Recommen-
dations re-
specting
Sunday
schools.

* Appendix E,—“Laws and Regulations of the Wesleyan-Methodist Missionary Society.”

republished, urging ministers to be members of the Sunday school committees, and directing that as many children as could possibly be accommodated with room, should attend public worship at least once on every Lord's-day.

Spiritual exercises and usefulness of John Smith and William Bramwell.

Peter M'Owan, Dr. M'Allum, and Walter Lawry, were among the preachers now admitted on trial. Thomas Harris, Joseph Beaumont, William Vever, George Cubitt, and Benjamin Clough, with many others, were received into full connexion. The work of God, through Methodist instrumentality, proceeded with its wonted vigour. John Smith, now in the morning of his day, was rendered very successful, whilst sowing the seed of eternal life. Writing to his father, he said, "Blessed be God, He is doing great things for us in Barnard-Castle. On Sunday last, four souls got into liberty; on Tuesday night, at the prayer-meeting, seven more. Many are, I believe, awakened, and I believe the work will go on." William Bramwell, with untiring zeal, was spending the last year of his life in Salford. Of his experience and labours there a friend says, "According to his own account, he seldom ascended the pulpit without strong conflicts. Perhaps his soul had been wrestling with God in mighty prayer, that the glory of the Redeemer might appear. But the nature of these conflicts he never mentioned. When, however, he had entered upon his duty, and sometimes even as soon as he entered the pulpit, his soul became unburdened; in the midst of his sermon he would obtain full liberty. Enraptured with the glories of heaven, and filled with holy fervour and zeal, he would lose sight of his presence in the body. At such seasons, the Spirit's influences were shed abroad; and if there was a heart that felt not, surely that heart was burdened by wilful prejudice, or had become a willing captive to a Laodicean spirit. The inhabitants of Manchester,

Salford, and Pendleton, remember many of those sermons with a mixture of the most exalted feelings. Those of Barton will never forget the last lovefeast which Mr. Bramwell held amongst them, when upwards of thirty souls were set at liberty.”*

During its progress, the Methodist Connexion had encountered, as our preceding volumes amply prove, very fierce and violent opposition; and many of its members and ministers had seceded from its communion. Yet, notwithstanding all these conflicts and secessions, the Body, as a whole, had maintained a very remarkable unity of theological doctrine. But this oneness of belief was now very seriously threatened by some opinions propounded by Dr. Adam Clarke, in his Commentary on the Scriptures. Such results of mere idiosyncrasy as the learned and pious author introduced in his explication of the *Nachash* of paradise, and some few other matters, would soon pass away from the public mind, and leave in their full and vigorous effect the mass of sound and godly instruction with which the Commentary was stored. But when Dr. Clarke formally and deliberately denounced the doctrine of our Saviour's Eternal Sonship “as an awful heresy, and mere sheer Arianism,” several preachers of the soundest judgment, and many of the people, thought that such a sentence, pronounced by an eminent Methodist divine, was calculated to compromise the religious character, and endanger the orthodoxy, of the Connexion; in a degree proportioned to the learning and ability so justly and universally ascribed to Dr. Clarke. But every one felt that this circumstance, which greatly aggravated the evil, also rendered the application of any efficient antidote extremely difficult.

Dr. Adam Clarke's published opinions on the Eternal Sonship of Christ.

* SIGSTON'S “Life of Bramwell,” p. 339.

Thomas Galland, M.A., of Queen's College, Cambridge, had entered the Methodist ministry at the Conference of 1816, and was stationed at Louth. He was on terms of intimate friendship with Watson. Startled by the novelty of Dr. Clarke's views on the Sonship, and the boldness with which he propounded them, Galland earnestly requested Watson to solve the difficulties which these statements had raised. Watson therefore entered upon a task, which, considering his junior standing in the Methodist Connexion, especially as compared with a veteran minister like Clarke, he might not have undertaken without this direct request. In opposition to Clarke's thesis, that the term "Son of God" is not applied in the New Testament to the divine nature of our Lord, but merely to His humanity, which was born of the Virgin, Watson proved that the title is applied to Christ, not with exclusive reference to His miraculous conception, but as the appropriate designation of a Divine Person. He showed, that the Jews, who were generally ignorant of the miraculous conception, uniformly regarded the terms "Son of God" as implying an equality with the divine nature.

Watson's
able reply.

Watson's limits, however, did not allow him to give a full and complete exposition of the doctrine in question : he satisfied himself with showing most conclusively, that Clarke had mistaken the sense of the sacred text. But on another, yet related point,—the use of reason in matters of revelation,—he also did great service, and was even more successful. "The province of reason," he maintained, is "to judge of the evidence of the record professing to be a revelation from God." This evidence is fairly subjected to our reason ; and we are not only at liberty, but bound, to consider it as fully as is necessary to the formation of a settled judgment, as to whether the professed revelation is really invested with

divine authority. But, when the mind is fully assured of this fact, then our reason is not to judge of the doctrines revealed. These may be, and often are, altogether beyond our reason. Frequently, as in the present case, they involve matters which cannot be paralleled by any earthly facts, or illustrated by any earthly analogies. Here, then, it is the province, alike of reason and the will, to submit and believe.

Watson concludes his invaluable tractate with the following able and eloquent paragraph: "It has, I know, been urged by some, as a reason for adopting Dr. Clarke's views on the Sonship of Christ, that they remove a difficulty from the doctrine of the Trinity. This is, indeed, their most delusive aspect; and the more may cursory readers be influenced by the fallacy, as they feel that the Deity of Christ is an essential doctrine of Christianity. But does the difficulty from which they think themselves relieved, press upon their faith or upon their reason? If upon the former, a moral defect is to be suspected; for whoever feels it difficult to admit the testimony of God in His word, is not brought under the full moral influence of the Gospel. The question still recurs, Is the eternal Sonship of Christ a doctrine of Scripture? If it be rejected because the Bible is silent on the subject, the proceeding is legitimate. If because it is a difficulty, and the depositions of Scripture are to be disregarded, that the difficulty may not press, the ground is changed; and we have laid down the principle that we will believe no difficult doctrine, though the Scriptures declare it. On such a basis no Christian system can possibly stand; it is a pyramid on its point, nodding to its fall. But if a difficulty be removed from our reason, our joy at the discovery ought not to be suffered to take its excursions of airy delight until we first

interrogate ourselves, whether the doctrine be one which can in its nature be tested by reason; whether, in this process, we have proceeded on authority. Sober theologians would also inquire, whether by freeing ourselves from one difficulty we do not entangle ourselves in many others; whether we shall not find, on the newly adopted scheme, additional difficulty in establishing the personalities in the Godhead; whether we shall not find it, not merely more difficult, but even impossible, to make out any meaning of half the passages in the sacred volume which speak of Christ as the Son of God, except by those lax and paraphrastic interpretations which we so justly protest against in those whose heresies we condemn, and which yield a meaning much below our present faith. This would be to purchase a relief from difficulty at much too dear a price; but in itself, and separate from consequences, the relief is worth nothing. It is, to my mind at least, a very strong argument, *à priori*, against any scheme, that it renders a doctrine of pure revelation less difficult to reason. I am inclined to say of it, as Chillingworth of novelties, ‘What is new in divinity is false.’ All such doctrines as to human reason, whether they are contrary to it, or transcend it, are in their nature difficult, and difficult because they are true; and, startling as it may appear to those who pay so much homage to the efficiency of reason, difficult in proportion as they are revealed. ‘God manifest,’ revealed ‘in the flesh,’ constitutes, emphatically, the ‘great mystery of godliness.’ The pretence of relieving the difficulties of such subjects has, in all ages of the church, smoothed the path to error. Arianism came in with this promise; Socinianism gave further relief to rational difficulties; Deism cut the knot, and spurned the fragments. ‘To the law,’ then, ‘and to the testimony.’ The outer court is yet our place; the

veil of the holiest is not yet drawn aside, except to faith ; and the great virtue of divines, like that of writers, is to know where to stop." *

The conflicting views entertained, on so important a doctrine, by men so justly eminent as Clarke and Watson, exercised an injurious influence on the Connexion ; and this was increased by the conduct of inferior men, who exerted themselves in an unworthy manner to exhibit these eminent ministers as personal antagonists ; a feeling which, there is the fullest proof, neither of them ever entertained.

The Conference of 1818 was held in Leeds ; the Rev. Jonathan Edmondson was president, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting secretary. Its proceedings exhibited a marked improvement in the internal economy of the Methodist Societies, the result of causes which had been in silent but effective operation for some years. They were chiefly originated by the active mind and enlightened judgment of Jabez Bunting ; and their beginning dated from the time of his accession to connexional office and influence. Framed, as the Methodist polity had mainly been, to meet the growing necessities of the community, it would have been strange, indeed, if—with the large increase of the Connexion, and the probability of its further extension—there had not been required considerable adjustment, revision, and expansion of its laws and usages. Bunting applied himself to this work with great ability and zeal. He derived valuable assistance in these efforts from Richard Watson, George Marsden, and several other preachers. His principal object, so far as it can be gathered from his acts, was to obtain for Methodist preachers the full *status* and character of Christian ministers, and to secure for the laity an efficient influence

The Conference of 1818: its transactions.

* The REV. RICHARD WATSON'S Works, vol. vii., p. 86.

in the government of the Connexion, especially in its financial affairs.

Improved
organization
of Method-
ism with
respect to
ministers
and the
laity.

The recognition of Methodist preachers as Christian pastors, invested with all the powers and responsibilities of the sacred office, had now become a pressing necessity. For although, twenty years before, the Conference had successfully resisted the most determined efforts to introduce any others than itinerant preachers into the Conference, the ministers themselves, nevertheless, stood before the Connexion and the country in a position scarcely different from that of laymen. They had been so treated by the Founder of the Connexion; they were not appointed to the sacred office by any of those forms of ordination which obtained in other Christian churches; they had not assumed the title of "reverend," which, by law and established usage, was universally conceded to ministers of every denomination; they continually addressed each other, and were generally addressed, as though they had no claim to the ministerial character; and hence they could scarcely hope to be generally regarded as ministers of the Gospel.

The effect of these usages was greatly heightened by the peculiar practices of the Connexion. On the Circuit plans, the ministers were associated with "local preachers." These were gentlemen, merchants, artisans, and labourers, who devoted a portion of the Sabbath to the proclamation of the Gospel; but who, pursuing their ordinary avocations, neither regarded themselves, nor wished to be regarded by others, as sustaining any ministerial character. The Methodist ministers, although fully devoted to the labours of the sacred office, differed so little in external appearance and profession from these lay preachers, that their truly ministerial character could scarcely be recognised. And yet no serious Christian,

forming his opinion from the teaching of the word of God, can for a moment doubt that these men were, in the fullest sense, ministers of Christ; and that the church, of which they were the accredited pastors, suffered serious loss on account of their not being publicly and generally recognised as such.

Mr. Bunting took the lead in the measures necessary to accomplish the public recognition of their ministerial character. It had been usual, in Quarterly Meetings of local preachers, when the examination into character took place, to read all the names on the plan, beginning with the superintendent. Mr. Bunting objected to have his name thus read, on the ground that it was not the place for any examination into his character, that being done at District Meetings and the Conference. By this means he drew a distinction between the itinerant and the local preachers, which, to some extent, recognised the proper pastoral *status* of the former. This, and other apparently trivial, but significant circumstances, prepared the people to regard those who were so truly their "pastors and teachers," as Christian "ministers." But now another and more decided step was taken. The decisions of the Conferences of 1793 and 1794, that the title of "reverend" should not be applied to preachers, were abrogated; and in the Minutes of 1818, "Rev." is prefixed to the names of all preachers, members of the Missionary Committee. From this time the Methodist preachers stood before the Connexion and the country, as claiming the character and position awarded to Christian ministers of other religious denominations.

The other improvement to which allusion has been made,—the creation of a salutary and efficient lay influence in Wesleyan government,—was equally important. Although the introduction of laymen into the Conference had been

found impracticable, it was soon apparent that a large portion of the connexional executive must be carried on by committees, in some of which laymen of ability might, with great advantage, take a prominent part. As the community increased, this fact became more evident, especially in its most important financial departments.

For many years, the debts of the Methodist chapels were a source of great and distressing embarrassment to the whole Connexion. The difficulty had been long felt; the subject had been submitted to very patient and extensive inquiry; and at this Conference a general fund for the relief of distressed chapels was formed. An appeal was made for yearly subscriptions in support of this institution, and an annual collection was ordered to be made in all Methodist chapels.

This very wholesome improvement removed a most anomalous and disagreeable mode of meeting cases of distress, which had long been in operation, namely, by ministers begging through neighbouring Circuits. It greatly increased the means of relieving embarrassed trusts; and it afforded an opportunity of introducing the lay element into this important branch of Wesleyan economy. A committee, composed of fifteen ministers, and an equal number of lay-trustees, was appointed to consider all applications for relief, and to distribute the amount of aid that could be afforded.

A similar course was taken in the organization of the Missionary Society. The committee was composed of forty-eight members, one half of whom were ministers, and the other half laymen, subscribers to the funds. The constitution of this Society was principally drawn up by Messrs. Bunting and Watson. The soundness of the principles on which it was framed, and the perfect adapta-

tion of the rules and arrangements, have been fully proved by the successful operations of the Society during forty years.

Several ministers, of more than ordinary celebrity, died soon after the Conference of 1818. William Bramwell, whose apostolic labours and usefulness we have so frequently mentioned, was removed from the scene of his earthly toil by sudden death. He attended the Conference at Leeds, and was present at its last sitting, on Wednesday, August twelfth. While at supper with the family with whom he lodged, raising his hand, and looking upward, he said, with a smile, "It strikes me that one of us will be gone in three or four months." On which it was observed, "If it should be Mr. Bramwell, we should say, 'Who could have thought it, as he looked so well at the Conference?'" He replied, "Several of my friends have died of apoplexy, and I expect to go in the same way." He sat up late to hear from a friend the last transactions of the Conference, and was heard praying with great earnestness soon after he entered his room. He was again heard thus engaged about two o'clock in the morning. At half-past two he came down stairs, took breakfast, prayed with the servant, and left the house about three o'clock, to take his place in the coach to return home. He had not proceeded many yards from the door before he was attacked with apoplexy, and was found by two watchmen, able to speak, perfectly conscious, and calm; but he expired just as he was brought back to the house. A peaceful and, indeed, triumphant termination of a life eminently pious and useful. It is difficult to convey, in a few words, any adequate idea of the deep spiritual piety which characterized the latter years of this devoted minister's life. Walking in constant and intimate communion with God, his "conversation was in

Death of
Bramwell,
Bardsley,
and Brack-
enbury.

heaven; his words were seasoned with grace; he often expressed an earnest desire to depart and be with Christ. His faith in God was truly mighty in power. He lived and died a burning and a shining light."

The venerable Samuel Bardsley, who had for some time been the oldest preacher in the Connexion, also died on his way from the same Conference to Manchester, to which Circuit he had been appointed. Journeying from Leeds with his friend Mr. Wrigley, they stopped to sleep at Delph. Having taken tea, Mr. Bardsley wished to retire to rest; and his friend accompanied him up stairs. But before they reached the top, Mr. Bardsley, appearing to be tired, sat down, and, having sweetly said, "My dear, I must die," instantly expired. With all the genuine simplicity of a child, this good man evinced the maturity of the Christian character. Transparently sincere, profoundly zealous for the cause of God, and minutely attentive to every part of Christian discipline, he, for a long series of years, continued an acceptable and useful minister of the new covenant, and his departure was lamented by all who knew him.

Robert Carr Brackenbury, a gentleman of family and fortune, expired August tenth, 1818, at his seat, Raithby Hall, near Spilsby, Lincolnshire. He was an eminently pious man and useful preacher; but, through what we regard as a culpable construction of his dying request, that he might not be made the subject of human panegyric,*

* In allusion to this request Montgomery wrote the following lines for his tablet.

"Silent be human praise!
The solemn charge was thine,—
Which widow'd love obeys,
And on thy lowly shrine
Inscribes the monumental stone
With 'Glory be to God alone!'"

the church has been deprived of any tolerable account of his life and labours. Surely information respecting matters of fact might have been given without extravagant laudation. Although his name was on the Minutes, Mr. Brackenbury can scarcely be regarded as a minister. His name does not appear as one received on trial, or into full connexion. He stands as appointed to Jersey and Guernsey four years successively, (1786–1789,) after which he was set down as a supernumerary in several Circuits, in all of which he was extensively useful. In his death he expressed strong confidence in God, and the fullest reliance on the atonement of Christ.

The Conference of 1818 had deliberated on the various suggestions offered by ministers and laymen, for an improved mode of making provision for the families of the preachers. The London ministers were directed to obtain, by circulars addressed to the superintendents, the number of preachers' children to be provided for by the Connexion, and other details. These returns having been carefully examined, the subject was to be considered in the presence of the stewards at the ensuing District Meetings.

Results of
the Confer-
ence of 1818.

The decisions of the several Districts were submitted to the Conference of 1819; and being favourable to the proposed plan of a separate fund, to be called the "Children's Fund," it was defined and established as a permanent institution of the Connexion. The principle of this new arrangement was, to divide the cost of maintaining the children among the several Districts, in proportion to the number of members.* If any District had a *less* number

* When the number of members in Great Britain was divided by the total of preachers' children, it was found that there were that year one hundred and sixty-six members to every child. A statement was accord-

of children than it was required to support, those resident in the Circuits within the District were first provided for, and the surplus money sent to the general treasurer. And if a District had a *larger* number of children than the arrangement required it to provide for, it received from the general treasurer the amount deficient. The Circuits in each District were of course required to contribute according to their number of members respectively, subject to any arrangement which the District Meeting might see fit to make in consequence of other circumstances. But in every case each District was required to furnish the whole sum, according to its number of members.

This was a very great improvement in the financial economy of Methodism. It relieved the preachers from one of the most general, and frequently one of the most neglected, of their absolute requirements, and greatly assisted small Circuits to which preachers with large families had been appointed. It also removed one great difficulty in the stationing of the preachers, by making the maintenance of their children a charge, not on the Circuit to which the minister might be appointed, but on the Connexion at large.

In other respects, the Minutes of 1819 bear ample evidence that great practical and administrative ability had been introduced into the Conference, and had obtained influence and power. From the beginning, there were Circuits which did not possess ability fully to support their own ministers. Their deficiencies became a charge on the Connexion, and were met partly by an annual subscription from the Societies at the March quarterly visitation ; partly by an annual public collection, called the July Collection ;

ingly drawn up, apportioning to every District a certain number of children to be provided for, according to its number of members.

and partly by a sum received from year to year out of the profits of the Book-Room. These varied sums formed the Contingent Fund. This fund was also charged with any extraordinary expenses arising out of the general working of the Connexion. The demands were generally beyond its means, and in times of national depression and general financial embarrassment the deficiency was large, and often fearfully oppressive. At the Conference of 1813, the debt was more than £4,700. An extraordinary grant from the Book-Room of nearly £2,500 beyond the annual contribution, enabled the treasurers in the following year to close the account without any balance. But in 1815 there was again a debt of £3,162, which increased the next year to £5,155. This increase evidently excited alarm among the preachers. They felt reluctant to call on the people for additional contributions in a time of universal national depression, and nobly determined to tax themselves to the full extent of the amount. By taking the old stock of books lying in the Book-Room, or giving up their claims to the slender allowances made to them, they more than swept away the debt. Yet, notwithstanding this noble act of self-devotion, over and above the donation from the Book-Room of £3,420 worth of stock, it was necessary to procure from that institution an advance on loan of £4,613, to close the account of 1817. The urgency of this case was brought before the Connexion, and preachers and people nobly responded to the appeal. Soon after the Conference, the treasurer received the aggregate amount of £4,777. But although every practicable retrenchment was effected, the debt in 1818 was £2,382. This succession of embarrassments, and continual recurrence of difficulty and debt, called forth the able and energetic exertions of Bunting, Watson, and others, who had now considerable influence

in the Conference. The result was the preparation of a new plan for meeting the demands arising from year to year, as claims on the connexional funds. The resources of the ensuing year were assumed to be the same as the last; and then, deducting a reasonable sum for extraordinary demands, such as travelling expenses of preachers not met by the Circuits, grants to Circuits taking additional preachers, grants for furniture, and for other miscellaneous claims, the remainder was divided between the several Districts, as their different circumstances, ascertained by a careful regard to the claims sent up, seemed to require. Such sums respectively were placed before the several financial District Meetings, to be apportioned to the Circuits in each District. As the amount of the annual collection for the preceding year was made the basis of this allotment, whenever the proceeds from this source were less in a District than they had been the year preceding, the deficiency was deducted from the amount apportioned to the District, so that no additional burden fell on the Connexion at large. This measure preserved the community from financial embarrassment for many years.

The Conference of 1819: its decisions.

In consequence of the preachers in the western part of the island complaining that the existing arrangements for holding the Conference required it to assemble in northern towns three years in succession, the Conference of 1819, which, in regular rotation, would have met in Liverpool, assembled in Bristol. The Rev. Jonathan Crowther was elected president, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting secretary. This Conference carefully reviewed the measures adopted the preceding year for the establishment of a General Chapel Fund; recorded the "high and grateful satisfaction" with which they had received the first "Report;"

and made several arrangements for the purpose of still further increasing its efficiency. In accordance with the rule of the preceding Conference, a committee for the distribution of the fund was appointed, consisting of the president and secretary, fifteen ministers, who were named, and fifteen trustees, to be appointed by various Quarterly Meetings of Liverpool, (where the next Conference was to be held,) and the surrounding Circuits.

The Minutes of this Conference present the first methodical arrangement for holding meetings of the committees previous to the opening of Conference.* And as all these committees, except that which had charge of the book affairs, consisted of ministers and laymen in nearly equal numbers, the leading financial interests of the Connexion were brought under the cognizance and supervision of several influential lay gentlemen previous to each Conference.

The present is a suitable opportunity for introducing some notice of a man who, although in humble circumstances, and a stranger to the polish and refinement of secular learning, fills an eminent position in Methodist history. WILLIAM CARVOSSO was born in 1750, near Mousehole, a fishing village about three miles from Penzance. His father had been pressed into his majesty's

William
Carvosso.
His charac-
ter and use-
fulness.

* Stationing Committee.....Monday, July 18th, 6 o'clock, A.M.

(and, it is presumed, the following days,)

Missionary	„	.....Friday,	„	22nd, 9	„	„
Chapel Fund	„	.....Saturday,	„	23rd, 9	„	„
Book	„	.....Monday,	„	25th, 6 & 9	„	„
School	„	.....	„	„ 3	„	P.M.
Financial	„	for	}	...Tuesday	„	26th, 6 & 3 „ A.M.
extraordinaries						
Same, for apportion-	}	„	„	„	3	„ P.M.
ment of children						

The last-mentioned committee consisted of the chairman and representatives of Districts, and such members of the other committees as could attend.

navy, served on board a man-of-war, and died in Greenwich Hospital while the boy was young. William, chiefly through the instrumentality of his sister, was converted when about twenty-one years of age. He had been apprenticed to a farmer; when he reached man's estate he married, and took a small farm near Penzance. He afterward removed to a larger one near Ponsanooth, in the neighbourhood of Penryn. Here he brought up a family, was a useful class-leader, and distinguished for his uniform and consistent piety. His wife having died, his elder children being married, and his youngest son Benjamin called to the ministry among his own people, he was brought more prominently into public life. Having now no family to provide for, he was frequently the subject of very painful exercises as to the course he should take in reference to his worldly affairs. He earnestly sought divine direction, and one evening, whilst seriously considering this subject, and lifting up his heart to God, these words were powerfully applied to his mind: "Behold, I have set before thee an open door." His heart responded, "Then I will at once go out, and retire from the world and its cares." Disposing of his property, and relinquishing his farm, he went to reside with his married daughter near Falmouth; and, as opportunities offered, visited different localities, and devoted himself to the promotion of religion wherever he went.

For nearly twenty years he pursued this course with extraordinary diligence and success. Friends in almost every part of Cornwall earnestly invited him to make a brief sojourn with them. He would attend prayer-meetings, meet classes, give exhortations, and visit from house to house. In exhorting sinners to renounce their sins and seek salvation, and in explaining the way of faith,

his success was very great. On one or two occasions, when crowds were gathered together through his influence, he was persuaded to speak from the pulpit ; but at these times he was never happy. He was not called to preach. But in the free and colloquial exhortations of the classroom, or the prayer-meeting, the impressions produced by his addresses were profound and extensive. He was equally happy in his private intercourse. There was a sweet softness in his manner, a holy unction with his words, and his whole bearing indicated such affectionate sympathy, that the most godless and profane listened with patient interest to his communications. Great numbers were won to Christ by his instrumentality. But there was no sphere of usefulness in which he was more eminent than in leading believers to the attainment of perfect love. His knowledge of the devices of Satan, of the great and precious promises of God, and of the way and power of faith, was extensive and practical. He would, with admirable tact, contrive and create opportunities for usefulness, and thousands in Cornwall and the western parts of Devonshire were by these means brought to a knowledge of salvation ; while thousands more were quickened to a closer walk with God.

To prevent the character of this excellent man being mistaken, it may be necessary to add, that in his manner and mode of address William Carvosso was as far removed from rant and disorder, as from coldness and formality. Gentle, orderly, with a soft and winning address, he conducted all his public services with the utmost decorum. And although illiterate and simple-minded, his private and social advices were always characterized by politeness, reserve, and propriety. We speak with confidence ; for we knew him intimately many years. He died triumphantly in the faith of the Gospel, October thirteenth, 1834.

The Rev. V. Ward's reprehension of Dr. A. Clarke: the Doctor vindicated.

Before the public mind of the Methodist people had lost the excitement caused by the controversy on the "Sonship," it was unpleasantly affected by an incident which produced in some of Dr. Clarke's friends an impression that his brethren were disposed to harass, if not to persecute, him. The Doctor had written a letter in January, 1818, to the Wesleyan Missionary Committee, giving an account of the successful issue of his instruction of two Buddhist priests brought to this country by Sir Alexander Johnstone, and confided to Dr. Clarke's care by the Missionary Committee. In this letter he incidentally observed, as an incentive to missionary effort, that a goodly number of eminent men, both in the Established Church and among the different bodies of Dissenters, had arisen to proclaim the truth as it is in Jesus; that the light of the Gospel had been conveyed to every part of the land; and, therefore, we had little more to do in this nation than to maintain the ground already gained, and care for the rising generation.

This letter was published with the missionary intelligence in the "Methodist Magazine" for March; and was followed, in the June number of the same periodical, by a communication from Mr. Valentine Ward. The writer strongly censured the Doctor for having greatly overstated the religious condition of England, which Mr. Ward maintained still abounded in immorality and crime. He also censured the allusion to eminent Churchmen and Dissenters, and urged that "a great majority" of these ministers were Calvinists, whose preaching was not the Gospel of the New Testament. The effect of this letter, appearing as it did in the recognised literary organ of the Connexion, was very injurious. The multitude of Dr. Clarke's friends and admirers regarded it as a most unpro-

voked attack. For although much contained in Mr. Ward's letter was correct, and might have been a suitable reply, if Dr. Clarke had, of set purpose, been describing the religious condition of this country and its clergy, it was felt to be entirely uncalled for, as the passage was merely an allusion to the means which the people possessed of becoming acquainted with religious truth.

The injury thus inflicted, undoubtedly without any bad intention, was promptly and handsomely repaired. A note appeared in the next number of the "Magazine," signed "Jabez Bunting, Joseph Taylor, Jun., and Richard Watson," as general secretaries for the Missions, which stated that Dr. Clarke's letter had greatly served the cause of Missions.* The note places the subject in a clear light, and fully vindicates Dr. Clarke from the censure of Mr. Ward, promising a future paper in explanation of the remarks

* "We are, however, concerned to find that some parts of it have been strangely misunderstood by one of our respected brethren, the Rev. Valentine Ward, of Aberdeen, whose animadversions have been published in the 'Magazine' for June. We are persuaded that the venerable editor of that work was induced to admit Mr. Ward's letter by a desire to impress on its readers the necessity and undiminished importance of exertions for the further spread of religion at home, in connexion with those which are so laudably made for its propagation abroad. On that point we most heartily concur with Mr. Ward in sentiment; but we are prepared to maintain that there is nothing in Dr. Clarke's letter, which, if fairly and candidly construed, is at all hostile to that conviction. We are, therefore, of opinion, that no such strictures as those which Mr. Ward has written were called for on this occasion; and there are several passages in his communication, some of which relate to Dr. Clarke's letter, and others to our fellow-Christians of other denominations, to which we most strongly object, and the introduction of which we exceedingly regret. We have authority to state, that the Book Committee in London, when they first read these passages in the 'Magazine,' fully shared with us in the feeling which we now express. And they have unanimously requested us to draw up some remarks on Mr. Ward's letter, which the editor has readily agreed to publish in his number for August."

made by Mr. Ward respecting ministers of other denominations,—a promise amply redeemed in the next number.*

Conference
of 1820: pe-
culiar cir-
cumstances.
Liverpool
Minutes.

According to the arrangement already mentioned, the Conference of 1820 was held at Liverpool, when the Rev. Jabez Bunting was elected president. This election was remarkable from the fact, that no minister had been appointed to the presidency at so early a period of his ministerial career. And to this day the fact stands alone, without any other example of so early an election. The Rev. George Marsden was chosen secretary. These appointments were very opportune. The circumstances of the times were perilous, and required great ability in the governing powers. The state of the nation was calamitous. Trade languished, and the public mind was in a very perturbed state. The death of George III.; the Cato Street conspiracy to assassinate the ministers and revolutionize the country; the return of Queen Caroline, and the accusations brought against her by the law officers of the Crown,—all united to excite a people extensively acted upon by inflammatory demagogues, and governed by a party which had not yet learned to adapt their measures to the circumstances and spirit of this advanced and progressive age.

All these agencies operated unfavourably on the religious interests of the country. They affected Methodism so as to produce unprecedented results. From the year 1766, when the numbers in Society were first published, for fifty-four years consecutively, the Conference had never met without reporting a numerical increase. Now, for the first time, there was a decrease in Great Britain of four thousand six hundred and eighty-eight. There was an

* "Methodist Magazine," 1819, pp. 617-624.

increase in Ireland, and on the foreign Missions; but these were not sufficient to cover the loss at home. There was a gross deficiency on the year, in the aggregate of the Societies under the care of the British Conference. This circumstance produced a profound sensation on the assembled preachers, and led to an earnest conversation on the measures to be adopted "for the increase of spiritual religion among our Societies and congregations, and for the extension of the work of God in our native country." The discussion issued in a series of resolutions and advices, familiarly known as "the Liverpool Minutes;" of which it is scarcely possible to speak too highly. In a manner equally clear, forcible, and practical, they range over the whole course of a Christian minister's duty. They point out all the principal means by which weakness and decline are introduced into Christian churches; and offer suitable cautions and exhortations for prevention. The dangers of lax discipline are exhibited in their wide extent and variety, and adequate advice administered. Ministers, lay officers, and private members are appropriately warned, directed, and exhorted; in the true spirit of the Christian pastorate,—in wisdom, meekness, love. The whole document breathes a fine, earnest, evangelical tone. Indeed, these Minutes, drawn up on a special occasion, and for the purpose of meeting a particular case, are fraught with so much wisdom and practical godliness as to be applicable to all times and seasons. They are appointed to be read in every Annual District Meeting in Methodism, and also once during the year in the weekly Preachers' Meetings of every Circuit. One means for promoting spiritual prosperity, which they recommend, is the appointment of the next quarterly fast-day for special humiliation and prayer for the revival of the work of God.

The Conference considered the injury done to Methodism, and the injustice inflicted on the memory of its founder, by Southey's "Life of Wesley, and Rise and Progress of Methodism." Of the injustice inflicted on Wesley's character by this publication we have already spoken.* We have proved that the talented author lived long enough to be convinced of his errors, and to purpose repairing, as far as possible, the injury he had done. It is to be lamented that his life was not prolonged to fulfil his purpose; and still more, that his son has thought proper to ignore his father's declared intention, and in successive editions to perpetuate the errors which their author deplored and recanted.

Watson's
Review of
Southey's
Life of
Wesley.

Having considered the character and tendency of this work, the Conference requested Watson to comply with the application of the Book Committee, to prepare and publish a review of Southey's "Life of Wesley" as early as possible. He consented, and soon afterwards sent forth a large pamphlet, which will be a standard work in Methodist, and indeed in English, literature, as long as the language exists. Considering the learning, ability, and high literary character of the poet laureate, this task was most arduous. It was, however, successfully performed. Watson's tact, genius, and grasp of mind, rendered him equal to his more practised opponent. But these alone would not have secured him the triumphant victory which he achieved. Southey had for once grappled with a subject beyond his powers. His knowledge of spiritual religion was too limited, his acquaintance with the grand evangelical principles and truths of the Gospel too superficial. He attempted the impossible task of estimating the profound truths of God, and their influence through the power of the

* Vol. i., p. 602.

Holy Ghost on human minds, by the limited measures of a narrow, carnal philosophy. For this reason, as Watson stated at the time, the work of Southey was just as damaging to scriptural Christianity as to Methodism: and this circumstance rendered Watson's reply scarcely less valuable as an exposition and defence of the religion of the Bible than of Wesley and his Connexion. George the Fourth, whose curiosity led him to read Watson's Review, is reported to have observed, "The Methodist preacher has beaten my poet laureate!"

The Rev. Joseph Benson, who had been a Methodist preacher fifty years, twice president of the Conference, and for many years the official editor, finished his career on February sixteenth, 1821. As frequent allusions on our preceding pages show, he filled a large space in Methodist history, during a great part of his ministerial life. He was the son of a farmer, who lived on a small paternal estate at Melmerby, in Cumberland. He was born January twenty-fifth, 1748; and was converted to God, when about sixteen years of age, principally through the instrumentality of a pious cousin and of the Methodists, with whom both he and his cousin had become connected. He was soon recognised, by the Methodist preachers, as a lad of considerable promise, and was strongly advised by Rankin and Hopper, to wait on Wesley. Hearing that Wesley was at Newcastle-on-Tyne, Benson set out on foot from his father's house to seek the desired interview. When he reached Newcastle, however, he had the mortification to learn that Wesley had left for the metropolis. Determined to secure his object, he thought of engaging a passage in a vessel for London; but as none sailed so soon as he desired, he boldly set out on foot to walk the entire distance, about three hundred miles. How vividly do such efforts

Joseph Benson :
his life,
character,
and death.

show the vast changes which have taken place in our country during two generations! When he had proceeded as far as York, he met with a gentleman acquainted with Wesley. Having learned the particulars of his case, the benevolent man could not bear the idea of one so young prosecuting such a journey on foot in the depth of winter, and he generously paid his fare to London. Arrived in the metropolis, he found that Wesley was at Kingswood. He therefore waited in town, enjoying the religious advantages it offered, and on Wesley's return had the much desired interview. Wesley, perceiving that he had received a liberal education, sent him as classical tutor to Kingswood. Here he remained some years; and, while teaching others, prosecuted his own studies with great diligence. About the latter part of 1769, Lady Huntingdon solicited him to accept the mastership of her college at Trevecca, of which she had made Fletcher the Principal. In about twelve months, however, her ladyship's Calvinism had become so strongly developed, that Fletcher and Benson were obliged to terminate their connexion with her college.

Whilst at Kingswood, namely, March sixteenth, 1769, Benson entered his name on the books of the University of Oxford; and from that time, and during his stay at Trevecca, regularly kept his terms at St. Edmund's Hall. On leaving Lady Huntingdon's College, he appears to have determined to be a minister of the Church of England. He therefore went to reside at Oxford, where he prosecuted his studies with great energy, and with equal fervour devoted himself to the cultivation of personal religion. But his candid spirit made no secret of his former connexion with Wesley and Lady Huntingdon; and these facts, with more recent instances of his active piety, coming to the knowledge of the vice-principal of his hall, he refused any longer

to act as his tutor, and gave him notice, that he would never sign his testimonials for orders. Although shut out by this intolerance from access to the Established Church in the usual way, his friends did not despair. He obtained respectable testimonials from beneficed clergymen in Wales; a parish with a large church was procured for him as a title, by one of his clerical friends; his testimonials, countersigned by the Bishop of St. David's, were presented to the Bishop of Worcester, in whose diocese the parish was situated: but all these efforts were unavailing; the bishop refused to allow him to be examined, alleging as a reason his want of an academic degree.

These disappointments decided Benson's course for life. At the Bristol Conference of 1771, he was received on trial as a Methodist minister, an office which he worthily sustained to the day of his death. "His talents as a preacher were of an extraordinary kind. Distinct and accurate in his representations of divine truth, powerful in argument, inflamed with the love of Christ, and full of compassion for the perishing souls of unconverted men, he frequently appeared in the pulpit like a messenger from the eternal world. His applications at the close of his sermons were energetic and impressive almost beyond example. On many occasions, when thousands of hearers were hanging on his lips, the special blessing of God accompanied his ministrations; his own mind was deeply affected with the awful realities of eternity; the people wept aloud, and appeared to be bowed down beneath the power of the Holy Spirit; and in innumerable cases these impressions were permanent. Few ministers in modern times have been so successful in the conversion of sinners to God; and many spiritual children will be his joy and the crown of his rejoicing in the day of the Lord."

The principal connexional affairs in which he was prominently engaged, have been noticed in the preceding pages. In 1803 he was appointed editor of the Magazine. In this capacity he rendered very essential service to the Connexion and the religious world. We are well aware that some persons look back with a smile on the rigid, quaint, and mathematical-like divisions which he introduced into the Connexional periodical. But in pronouncing judgment on such a subject, we should remember the progress of literary manipulation during the last fifty years. Could we divest our minds of the results of this progress, we should look more charitably on the labours of our predecessors. In this department, as in every other, Benson displayed great ability, sound scholarship, deep piety, excellent judgment, and the strictest conscientiousness. He died full of peace and joy, bearing a clear testimony, throughout the illness which terminated his life, to the power of Christ to save from all fear. Renouncing all reliance on himself, he declared, "I have no hope of being saved, but by grace through faith." In the full assurance of this faith he passed away to be forever with the Lord.

Mission to
Australia :
its success
at Sydney.
Followed by
Missions to
Van Die-
men's Land,
New Zea-
land, and
Tonga.

Notwithstanding the depressing influences of the times, the Methodist missions continued to extend their operations and usefulness. This year, a step was taken of unusual importance,—we may say, of great daring. Two missionaries were sent to two of the most debased and barbarous tribes in the world, namely, the New Zealanders and the Friendly Islanders. Just as the renewed organization of the Missionary Society began, Mr. Butterworth recommended two Wesleyan schoolmasters for employment in New South Wales. These young men found a few persons in Sydney who had been connected with Methodism before they left

England. A class was formed, which held its first meeting, March sixth, 1812, and soon increased to twelve members. At Windsor, another class of six persons was gathered by an Irishman, who had been transported for forgery, and who, whilst lying under sentence of death, obtained a change of heart. Extenuating circumstances led to the commutation of his sentence. He carried into his banishment the gracious change, and was so employed as to be placed in easy circumstances, and became much and deservedly respected in the colony.

The schoolmasters wrote to the Society for a missionary, and happily Samuel Leigh, a man every way qualified for the important post, was sent. Converted whilst associated with the Independents at his native place, Hanley, in Staffordshire, he studied some time in their missionary seminary at Gosport. On mature inquiry and reflection, he adopted the Arminian system of theology, joined himself to the Methodist Church, and was sent, in 1814, as a missionary to Sydney. Here he found unexpected and formidable difficulties. On introducing himself as a Wesleyan missionary to the Irish gentleman before named, he said, "I am sorry to inform you, that it is now doubtful whether the governor will allow you to remain in the country in that capacity." Leigh waited on the governor, who asked, "Who sent you here in the capacity of a Wesleyan missionary?" And on being told, "The committee of the Society, at the request of some British emigrants," the governor added, "I regret you have come here as a missionary, and am sorry that I cannot give you any encouragement." The governor then offered him a situation in which he might grow rich; but Leigh assured him that he could act in no capacity but that of a missionary. He then stated the objects at which he aimed, and the

means by which he hoped to effect them. The governor listened attentively ; admitted the importance of the objects of his mission, and added, "If you will endeavour to compass them by the means now specified, I cannot but wish you all the success you can reasonably expect or desire."

Having thus far removed the obstruction to his work, and secured the protection of the government, Leigh proceeded with caution, but with earnest zeal and untiring perseverance, in the duties of his sacred office. He toiled alone four years, and was able to report an increase of the little Society from twelve to seventy, when a second missionary, Walter Lawry, was sent to his aid. He was followed, in 1819, by a third, Benjamin Carvosso ; and at the following Conference the decisive step before mentioned was taken. Two other labourers, Messrs. Erskine and Mansfield, were appointed to Sydney and its environs, Carvosso to Van Diemen's Land, Leigh to New Zealand, and Lawry to the Friendly Islands.

Leigh's success, however, was not achieved without much sacrifice, toil, and danger. Whilst labouring alone, and after his pious exertions had made an impression on the colony, Governor Macquarie invited the magistrates, military officers, and others, to dine with him at Windsor. At dinner, the resident magistrate alluded to Leigh's labours and success ; and told the governor that, unless some restraint were laid on him, they would soon, in his opinion, become a colony of Methodists. He concluded by recommending that Missionary Leigh be sent to work in the *chain-gang*, in the coal mines of Newcastle. "You had better," said an officer present, "let Missionary Leigh remain where he is, and keep a vigilant eye upon him."

The governor replied, "Gentlemen, I am neither unacquainted with the person to whom you refer, nor with his proceedings. As I did not, in the first instance, approve of his mission, I have, I assure you, kept a vigilant eye upon him. I have now sufficient evidence that he is doing good everywhere." Then, turning to the magistrate who preferred the complaint, his excellency added, "Sir, when Mr. Leigh comes here again, I desire that you will call the servants of the government into the store-room, that he may preach to them. Remember, I wish this to be regularly done in future."* It was thus that the devoted missionary commended himself to the approval of the candid and just.

The Conference of 1821 was held in Manchester, under the presidency of George Marsden. The increase of members on the year in Great Britain was over nine thousand; a pretty clear indication that the means devised at the preceding Conference for promoting spiritual religion in the Connexion were well-timed and effectual. There was a small decrease of members in Ireland, but an increase on all the mission stations; so that the aggregate increase in the Societies under the care of the British and Irish Conferences was more than ten thousand.

The Conference of 1821: its transactions.

Mr. Bunting was appointed editor in succession to the late Mr. Benson, and it was determined that two out of the three Missionary Secretaries should be released from all week-day Circuit duty, on account of the increasing demands on their time, and the onerous nature of the duties of that office. In a conversation "on the spiritual state and prospects of the Societies in general," the Conference, encouraged by the success which attended their effort last

* STRACHAN'S Life of Leigh, p. 74.

year, elaborated a series of advices, with a view to promote experimental piety and practical godliness. The Pastoral Address, also, which was ordered to be read to all the Societies in the respective Circuits, was very carefully prepared by Watson in his best style. It was richly imbued with divine truth, and contained an able exposition of motives and reasons for a close personal walk with God, and a life of active Christian zeal.

The Rev.
Robert
Newton
secretary.
Rev. Jabez
Bunting
editor.

Robert Newton was appointed for the first time secretary to the Conference, an office which he afterwards very frequently filled, with equal honour to himself and benefit to the Connexion. By his great ability, eloquence, and untiring zeal, he had rendered himself one of the most admired and honoured advocates of the great mission cause. So generally was this fact recognised, that at the last annual meeting of the Missionary Society, instead of being introduced in the usual way, as Robert Newton, from Manchester, (that being his Circuit,) he was announced as "Robert Newton, from everywhere where any interest is excited for Wesleyan Missions or missionaries."

The work in Ireland gave indications of improvement. In 1820 there was an increase of one thousand two hundred and twenty members; but at the following Conference there was a decrease of two hundred and sixty-two. The heroic Gideon Ouseley still pursued his course of missionary labour among his Popish countrymen; and never, perhaps, in the history of the world, did any man assail the errors of Popery with such a combination of learning and wisdom, piety and zeal.

The president of the Irish Conference of 1821 was Jabez Bunting; and the Minutes furnish ample proof of a very earnest effort to improve Methodist polity and finance in Ireland. A circular letter was sent to the Quarterly

Meetings, urging "the necessity and Christian obligation" of making such exertions in their own Circuits as the maintenance of the work required. Sunday schools were warmly recommended as a means of benefiting the rising generation. The still more important question of spiritual progress was raised; and the measures adopted in the Liverpool Minutes, with such few exceptions as the different circumstances of the two countries required, were urged on the Irish preachers and Societies.

In pursuance of the arrangement respecting the missionary secretaries, Joseph Taylor resided in the Society's house at Hatton Garden, and Richard Watson at a convenient distance from it, these being the two secretaries set apart to the duties of that office. The presence and hearty co-operation of such men, freed as they were from Circuit labour and responsibility, not only gave an important stimulus to the operations of the Missionary Society, but, in conjunction with the labours of the able preachers then stationed in London, raised the Connexion alike in practical efficiency and public estimation. In fact, from this time forward, we find Methodism occupying a higher position and status in the capital, and throughout the country, than it had previously attained. The fine philosophical character and mighty intellect of Watson, sanctified by deep Christian experience, fitted him to meet divines of any school, or statesmen of any calibre, on terms of equality; while the master mind of Bunting shrank from no difficulty, and dared every enterprise which Christian duty fairly placed in his way.

The missionary secretaries.
Happy effect of the appointment.

Under these auspices, and with other aids, which a hearty affection and respect had gathered around the editor, the Magazine rose in literary character and public estimation. Some of its reviews, contributed chiefly by

Watson, will well bear comparison with the best contemporary literature of their class.

Striking instance of Mr. Watson's devoted piety.

The strength of Wesleyan Methodism will always be its sterling piety. Shorn of this, it will crumble into ruins, and be a thing of nought. A simple incident recorded of Watson shows that there was no danger of any departure from the hallowed enjoyment and pure simplicity of the Gospel in his case, by being taken out of the regular work of the ministry. Released from the duties of a Circuit minister, he found that, while he obtained some increase of privilege, he was also exposed to some spiritual hazard, and he resolved to secure an appropriate remedy. Whilst engaged in his itinerant duties, he had constant opportunities of Christian fellowship, of which he was now deprived. And as he felt such spiritual intercourse necessary to holy vigour, and to quicken those devout affections which constitute the very life of personal religion, "he entered his name as a private member of a Class, under the care of Mr. Wright Turnell, which held its weekly meetings at a house in Myddelton Street, Spafields. Mr. Turnell was an aged Methodist, whose religious character had been tried by great vicissitudes of life; and he had invariably maintained his integrity. But that which recommended him to Mr. Watson was his deep and simple piety. The Class consisted mostly of poor people, accustomed to daily labour; but they were spiritual worshippers of God; their hearts and treasure were in heaven; and they used to meet together weekly, to declare the goodness of the Lord, and to be helpers of each other's joy. With these simple-hearted people Mr. Watson was wont to associate once a week, in the evening, when his health would permit."*

* JACKSON'S Life of Watson, p. 339.

While we do not record this incident as an example necessary to be followed in all cases, we cannot refrain from the expression of our conviction, that no minister in a similar position can imitate it without deriving much spiritual advantage to his own soul. And it is a gratifying fact, that so many of the Methodist ministers who have been withdrawn from ordinary ministerial work have kept up this close communion with the flock of Christ, by taking charge of Classes in the various localities where their lot has been cast. In addition to their own profit, they have thus rendered great service to spiritual religion, by conducting a weekly meeting for Christian fellowship, where the most intelligent members might find appropriate instruction.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1822 TO THAT OF 1827.

The Confer-
ence of 1822.
General
prosperity of
the work.

THE London Conference of 1822 was gladdened with full proof of the prosperity of the work of God in a great increase of members on the home Circuits; and the cheering intelligence from every part of the Mission field drew forth general expressions of gratitude to God, and greatly quickened the zeal of the assembled ministers.

The chair of the Conference was occupied by the Rev. Dr. Clarke. This was his third election to that important office,—an honour at that time unexampled, and one which, during the entire history of the Conference, has only been conferred upon THREE individuals. The Rev. Robert Newton was again appointed to the honourable position of secretary.

The attention of this Conference was specially directed to the obligations resting on the Methodist Connexion to prosecute, yet more extensively, the grand enterprise of spreading the kingdom of Christ in the earth. The conversation, introduced by the president in a lengthened address, turned chiefly upon the religious condition of the United Kingdom. It was shown that almost every part of our own land required a largely augmented agency; but the discussion specially elicited the melancholy fact, that the Northern Isles, including the Shetlands, the Orkneys, and the Hebrides, although belonging to this highly Christian country, peopled by a race speaking the same language, and having nearly the same customs with ourselves, were almost destitute of any vital means of Christian

instruction. Peculiar circumstances seemed to throw these destitute people on the sympathies of the Methodist Connexion; and so earnestly was the religious necessity of these islands urged by the president, that, although the pecuniary and ministerial resources of the Connexion were already severely taxed by a more than usual increase of ministers in many Circuits, it was determined to send two preachers to Shetland. The ministers selected for this important service were, John Raby, whose missionary spirit and zeal had been tested by seven years' service in the West India Islands, and Samuel Dunn, a young man from Cornwall, now entering on the fourth year of his probation. These men willingly offered themselves for the arduous and self-denying service of carrying the Gospel to the desolate inhabitants of the Shetland Isles.

Revs. John
Raby and
Samuel
Dunn sent
to Shetland.

This Conference is also memorable in the annals of the Connexion for a long and animated debate on the subject of ordination by the imposition of hands. The question was raised by a motion introduced by the Rev. Walter Griffith: "That the imposition of hands should be used on the admission of preachers into full connexion with the Conference." Considerable difference of opinion obtained among the preachers as to the propriety of affirming this resolution; but all admitted that the form hitherto in use possessed all the essentials of scriptural ordination, and that its validity was unquestionable. Several, however, contended for the adoption of the resolution, on the ground that ordination by the imposition of hands was certainly sanctioned by scripture precedent; while those who opposed it did not object to this argument, but feared lest the peace of the Societies should be endangered by adopting that which, although lawful, was not essential. It seemed, therefore, from this debate, that the introduction

Debate in
the Confer-
ence on
ordination of
preachers.

of the proposed measure was only a question of time. Mr. Griffith, satisfied for the present with this ventilation of the subject, withdrew his motion.

Origin,
object, and
beginning
of Watson's
"Theological
Institutes."

The circumstances in which Watson found himself at the Mission House, led him to enter upon a literary work of considerable magnitude and importance. He retained a lively sense of the difficulties which he encountered, when, as a very young man, he entered on the duties of a Minister, and devoted himself to the study of divinity. He saw that many of the junior brethren had now to struggle against the same inconveniences. As missionary secretary, one of his important duties was to superintend the divinity studies of the young men sent out into the missionary work. Proper masters were provided for the purpose of giving instruction in different branches of knowledge ; but to direct their studies in divinity was strictly Watson's own province. For this purpose, and to fortify their minds against the assaults of error, when far removed from other aids, he felt that he required a condensed but complete system of divinity, adapted to the times, and embodying an exposition and defence of the religious doctrines maintained by the Wesleyan Connexion. He found no such work in existence, and nobly determined to provide one.

This led to the preparation of his "Theological Institutes," in which, while attempting to gain his primary object, the gifted and devoted author also hoped to provide "a body of divinity adapted to the present state of theological literature ; neither Calvinistic on the one hand, nor Pelagian on the other," and in "a form adapted to the use of young ministers and students." He entered on the preparation of this noble work in the autumn of 1821, and the first part was published in the spring of 1823.

In several Circuits very remarkable effusions of the Spirit were witnessed. From Cleckheaton, it was reported, (January tenth,) "At present the work of God is in a state of prosperity in this Circuit. Since the last Conference we have admitted upwards of one hundred and twenty persons on trial." At Bury, Lancashire, (January twenty-first,) it was said, "The Lord is reviving His work among us in this Circuit. It began among the members chiefly; and among some who had backslidden from God, and had left the Society. But it is now becoming more general; and several great sinners have been converted to God. Since Christmas day, about fifty persons in different places have professed that they have found peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." At St. Neot's, where the cause had languished, the Spirit was poured out from on high, and the wilderness became a fruitful field. Prayer-meetings were filled every night in the week, and upwards of seventy persons were made happy in God, or were earnestly seeking His mercy. Similar manifestations of grace were experienced at Wirksworth, in the Cromford Circuit; and in numerous other places indications of a more than ordinary measure of power from on high rested on the people.

Revivals of religion in several Circuits.

It has often been a subject of gratitude to God, that amidst all the journeyings of the Methodist preachers in every kind of public and private conveyance, so few accidents of a serious nature have occurred, and so very few lives have been lost. The Methodistic year beginning with the Conference of 1823 was, however, called to witness a melancholy exception to the general safety in the loss of two valuable lives. On Monday morning, July twenty-eighth, the Revs. John James, E. B. Lloyd, and George Sargent, with several other preachers, left Halifax by coach for Sheffield, where the Conference was to open on Wednesday morning.

Deaths of Rev. Messrs. Sargent and Lloyd by a coach accident.

They proceeded safely until they came as far as Shelley Bank, about six miles and a half from Huddersfield, when the coach was upset, and all the passengers were thrown to the ground. Several persons, although injured, were able to pursue their journey the same day. Mr. James, the superintendent of Halifax, was severely bruised, and, although unable to proceed to Sheffield, had sufficient strength to return to Halifax, and report to the friends and the family of Mr. Lloyd the sad calamity. Mrs. Lloyd, with others, immediately hastened to the spot. Mr. Sargent was so dreadfully injured, that there was no hope whatever of his recovery. It could not, indeed, be certainly ascertained that he was ever conscious after the fall. He was, however, once or twice heard to say, "Happy, happy." He lingered until Wednesday morning, July thirtieth, when his spirit passed away to the skies.

Mr. Lloyd languished in great pain for nine days. At first, medical men held out some hope of recovery; but he declared throughout that he was a dying man, having received such extensive internal injuries as to render his restoration impossible. He suffered intense pain, which no medical aid could alleviate; but his mind was calm and happy. He was a man of no common order. In his twenty-first year, a conversation with an aged disciple led him to read Fletcher's "Appeal," which deeply impressed his mind; and soon afterwards, under the ministry of the Rev. Jacob Stanley, he obtained an assurance of the divine forgiveness. He entered the ministry in 1813, and for ten years pursued his abundant labours with unwearied diligence and success. By great industry he had stored a powerful and well-balanced mind with varied knowledge, which made him a workman that needed not to be ashamed. His preaching was lucid, original, and often deeply impres-

sive. His poetic compositions possess considerable merit; and his little work on "Religious Fasting" is the most sober and edifying treatise we have ever read on that important subject. Among the many glorious deaths recorded in the pages of the "Methodist Magazine," his is one of the most triumphant. "O, my friends, how sweet a thing it is to die! I had no idea it was so pleasant. I thought I was in heaven. Do I again see you?" His sun went down while it was yet day, and at a time when the church could ill spare one so thoroughly furnished for every department of ministerial duty.

Henry Moore was president, and Robert Newton secretary, at the Conference of 1823. No measures of public interest sufficient to call for special notice were promoted. The reports from the Mission Stations indicated a rapid extension of these evangelizing agencies, with a satisfactory measure of success. The home Circuits were generally in a state of activity and spiritual vigour, and multitudes of believers were added unto the Lord.

In the services connected with this Conference, an accident of a very alarming character occurred, which might have been productive of fatal consequences. Dr. Adam Clarke opened a new Wesleyan Chapel in Sheffield on the Sabbath preceding the Conference; and, in a letter to his wife, he says, "I preached with liberty; but when within ten minutes of the conclusion of my sermon, one of the front seats in the gallery gave way. I need say little more: recollect only the scene you witnessed with me at Rochdale,—well, this was its counterpart. In two minutes a thousand people were out of the chapel; and some in their alarm tore out the windows in the gallery and the gallery stairs, and precipitated themselves thence! It is useless to

The Conference of 1823.
Rev. Henry Moore president.

attempt to paint the scene: this is the third of the kind, and I think it will be the last which I shall witness."

General religious prosperity at home and abroad.

The success of missionary labours in the West Indies amongst the enslaved Negroes had greatly excited the indignation of the planters, and many of the leading men. Checked as the representatives of the West India interest had been in England, by the well-directed efforts of Watson and other influential ministers and philanthropists, the planters in the several islands seemed thrown on their own resources, and appeared quite disposed to take the matter into their own hands. In many of the islands things wore a very threatening aspect; and devoted ministers were labouring in great anxiety and peril. At length the storm broke on the London Society's mission in Demerara. The Rev. John Smith, who had exercised his ministry on that island about six years, and who a short time before was reported as "peaceably and usefully labouring in the midst of an extensive slave population, by whom he was universally respected and beloved," was, on the twenty-first of August, 1823, taken into custody, his private journal and other papers seized, and himself and Mrs. Smith lodged in the colony-house. The avowed reason for this severity was an allegation that Smith had in some way been a party to an extensive revolt of the Negroes in that island. After a painful imprisonment of seven weeks, during which he was refused all communication with his friends, he was summoned before a court-martial, on a charge of conspiracy against the peace of his majesty's government, and for abetting the late disturbance among the slaves. Though a minister of the Gospel, he was made amenable to a military tribunal, and deprived of the ordinary civil rights which belonged to him as a British subject. An immense mass of evidence was

Persecution of the Rev. John Smith at Demerara.

brought forward by his accusers ; which, instead of proving his guilt, served only to show the general excellence of his character as a minister and a man. The court, nevertheless, found him guilty, and sentenced him to death. He was transferred to the common felon's gaol, and the sentence referred to his majesty for confirmation. The result of an imprisonment for six months, in a tropic clime, was what every one anticipated. The decision of the home government was, that Mr. Smith was pardoned, but prohibited residing in the West Indies. When this decision reached Demerara, the persecuted minister was in the agonies of death, and soon afterwards expired.

Whilst John Smith was lying in gaol at Demerara, the enemies of missions in Barbadoes thought this a good opportunity of ridding themselves of the presence and influence of a Methodist missionary on that island. A letter written to the secretaries by Mr. Shrewsbury, and published in the "Missionary Notices" for October, 1820, was made the occasion of the greatest offence, although it contained nothing disrespectful to the colony, or, fairly considered, disparaging to any of the colonists. The missionary simply lamented the darkness and immorality of so many thousands of slaves. These expressions were, however, construed as reflecting discredit on the island, and favouring the emancipation of the Negroes. A furious clamour was raised, which Shrewsbury checked for a while by publishing the letter ; but when the "great doings" in Demerara were fully known, the storm broke out afresh, and raged with such fury, that the chapel, the missionary's library, furniture, and dwelling-house, were all totally destroyed, and the mission family obliged to fly for their lives. In a small vessel, manned by a captain

Outrages on
Methodism
in Barba-
does. Rev.
Mr. Shrews-
bury driven
from the
island.

and three black sailors, they embarked for St. Vincent's, where, by a most merciful providence, they arrived a few hours before Mrs. Shrewsbury was delivered of an infant.

The Barbadians of that day, not content that such ruffianism should be shrouded in darkness, gloried in their deed. Immediately after the demolition of the chapel, they published an inflammatory handbill; in which, avowing their joy at the "great and signal triumph over Methodism, and total destruction of the Methodist chapel," they expressed an earnest hope that all "true lovers of religion will follow the laudable example of the Barbadians, in putting an end to Methodism and Methodist chapels throughout the West Indies." The governor, to whom Shrewsbury had in vain applied for protection in his extreme distress and danger, now issued a proclamation, strongly censuring the lawless violence, and offering a hundred pounds reward to any person who would supply such information as might lead to the conviction of any of the offenders. The Barbadian rioters were, however, determined not to be outdone by their governor. The next day they published a manifesto, in which, after alluding to the offered reward, they threatened to inflict on any who, from pecuniary motives or vindictive feelings, should dare to injure any individual, such punishment as his crimes would justly deserve. They vindicated the acts of violence complained of, maintaining that they were not committed by a mob, but by nine-tenths of the community; and warned all Methodist preachers, at their peril, to approach Barbadoes.

These events made a profound impression, not only on the religious communities of Great Britain, but on the public generally. The national character was compromised,

and actual and avowed persecution had begun. These impressions became so deep and general as to demand a hearing where alone redress was to be obtained. The story of the injured missionary was told, and his character vindicated, by the most popular and powerful member of the British House of Commons. Henry Brougham submitted a motion to that House for inquiry into the case of John Smith the missionary, which occasioned a debate that lasted two nights, and called up the principal speakers of all parties. Canning, the government leader of the House, resisted the motion; evidently in order to screen the court-martial which had condemned the missionary from parliamentary censure; and also to save the government, which had compromised itself, by admitting the finding of the court-martial, so far as to forbid Smith to remain in the West Indies. But, whilst Canning endeavoured to secure these objects, he virtually admitted the innocence of the martyred missionary; and this was evidently the judgment of the House. Very important results therefore arose out of Brougham's able advocacy on this occasion. Not only was John Smith rescued from the obloquy of a condemned felon; he was placed before the world, at the very worst, as one who, having committed a mistake, had been mercilessly persecuted to a lingering death. With the character of the man, that of Missions was also vindicated; and those who attempted to show their injurious tendency were covered with shame. In addition to these gains, very important admissions were elicited from the ministry. Canning, whilst labouring to the utmost to preserve his government and the court-martial from censure, upheld, in the most explicit manner, the necessity of religious instruction for the colonies, as the foundation of all civil improvements; affirmed that

Parliamentary debate on the Demerara prosecution. Its beneficial results.

government would persevere in its plans for ameliorating the condition of the slaves; and, what is still more important, pledged himself that all attempts at religious persecution should be resisted and put down. These declarations, from the leader of the House, had a most important effect on the interests of the Missionary Societies.

Gracious
revivals in
several Cir-
cuits.

A better state of things prevailed at home. At Alston, in Cumberland, many were brought under serious impressions, and not a few obtained the forgiveness of sins. In one village, the fifty-one members at the late Conference had multiplied to one hundred and fourteen; and the increase in the entire Circuit was one hundred and forty-one. At Sowerby Bridge, genuine exultation often found expression in Charles Wesley's noble strains,—

“Our conquering Lord Hath prosper'd His word,
And made it prevail.”

There was an increase of one hundred and fifty-six members, with one hundred and twenty on trial. Northwich reported an addition of three hundred during the year.

But the most remarkable of these special visitations was in West Cornwall. In the Redruth Circuit, and some of the adjoining places in the neighbourhood of Truro, there was a remarkable anxiety to hear the word. At Camborne, Tuckingmill, Redruth, and, subsequently, at other villages, augmented numbers crowded the various chapels, both at the regular service, and at the different prayer-meetings. The ordinary stillness of these assemblies was soon disturbed by persons smiting upon their breasts, and crying aloud, “God be merciful to me a sinner!” In almost every meeting, held nightly for several weeks, and in various places, many were in deep distress. God heard the

cry of His saints, and comforted these mourners in Sion by blotting out their transgressions, and filling them with peace and joy through believing. These deep convictions and earnest cries for mercy cannot be accounted for on the ground of listening to impassioned sermons, and mingling in crowded and exciting assemblies. In many instances the bitterness of soul commenced before a single meeting of unusual excitement had been entered. While working in the fields, or deep down in the mine, strong men were so affected that they abandoned their work, and sought the instructions and prayers of their pious fellows on the spot, or hastened to the ever-open sanctuary, where the godly waited to instruct and lead them to Jesus. So glorious and wide-spread was this blessed work, that, within a few weeks, more than two THOUSAND persons were converted to God. Meetings for prayer were held every night; and in almost every one, many were found in deep distress on account of their sins, and after awhile found mercy, and were made unspeakably happy.

The history of every section of the Church is marked with alternate success and trial. So it was with Methodism. A leader and local preacher, near Hull, raised a controversy in the Connexion this year, which may be considered as the means of mooted two distinct questions in Methodist polity; questions which have been since most amply discussed. Mr. Mark Robinson, a linen-draper, of Beverley, unhappily fell into some unpleasantness with his brethren on the subject of a contemplated separation of Beverley from Hull, by which Beverley would be made the head of a new Circuit. This circumstance led him and several of his friends to look more carefully, and with no very friendly eye, on the system with which they were connected. They resolved to procure adherents in

Mr. Mark Robinson disingenuously propounds his scheme of Church Methodism.

other Circuits, and then endeavour to carry out their views in remodelling the Methodist economy. A rather extensive correspondence, intended to be conducted with the strictest secrecy, was opened. Unfortunately for the success of the scheme, one of these letters, addressed to a gentleman at Scarborough, fell into the hands of the Hull ministers. The contemplated division not being fully consummated, Hull was still Robinson's Circuit. As this letter contained expressions and avowed purposes of a very strange character, complaint was made to Robinson. He admitted having lent his name to the letter; and, instead of justifying its propriety, propounded several queries to the superintendent respecting the powers of the Conference and other parts of Methodist polity. These queries he was requested to commit to writing, and his reply, when afterward published, extended to forty-seven octavo pages.

Mr. Robinson's objections to the powers exercised by the Conference led him to an earnest recommendation of the principal demands made long before by Mr. Kilham, the substance of which had been incorporated into the constitution of the "New Connexion." "Why, then, did Robinson burden himself with attempting to alter a system which he regarded as so very unsound, when there was one already in existence, framed on his favourite principles, and courting his presence and co-operation?" He had a very sufficient answer for this inquiry. Excellent as he might regard the "New Connexion," on account of the infusion of the lay element into its supreme courts of judgment and legislation; he had, on other grounds, stronger objections to that system than even to Wesleyanism itself. As we have already shown, the "New Connexion" was from the beginning essentially a dissenting body; and in that Connexion local preachers were not only

allowed to administer the Lord's Supper, but their rules enjoined that they should do so, especially to country Societies. But Mark Robinson was emphatically a Church Methodist. One of the greatest of his complaints against the preachers was, that they led the people away from the Church. And the great object at which he aimed was, not the limitation of the power of the preachers for its own sake ; but that, by this means the whole Connexion might be brought back into intimate communion with the Established Church.

It is on this particular part of his scheme that we shall make a few observations. If we must discuss the question of the powers of the Conference further than has been already done, a more suitable opportunity will afterwards occur. That it was the plan of Robinson and party to bring the Methodist Connexion into union with the Church, is very evident from his letter, which, there can be no doubt, substantially embodied the views of the party. He says, "It has long appeared to me, and several respectable friends, who are also members of our Society, that there is a rapid dissent effecting in the country, from the Established Church, by the Methodists, who seem determined to set up a rival Church, as is intimated by morning service, administering the sacrament, burying the dead, erecting organs, employing vergers with their uniform and wands. You are, perhaps, aware that thousands of our friends in Ireland have refused to take the sacrament at the hands of the preachers, and are now carrying on the original simple plan of itinerancy, in union with the Established Church. With this Society we have opened a correspondence, and have it in contemplation to apply to our own Conference, to return to simple primitive Methodism ; and, if the Conference will not listen to it, to

apply to the Irish Methodists, to send over some efficient preachers to make the attempt. This plan has been laid before a meeting of the pious clergy, who have most heartily entered into our views, and will give us any assistance consistent with their office."

Its unreason-
able and im-
practicable
character.

Nothing further is necessary to show the object of this movement; and had not the same project in substance been frequently put forth as practicable and desirable, we should have thought it unnecessary to add another word in order to show its impracticability and absurdity. Nothing can be further from the truth, (as our preceding pages have proved,) than the allegation, that the sacraments were introduced into the Methodist chapels at the instance of the preachers. It is true that Dr. Adam Clarke and many other ministers thought it right that the sacraments should be administered to the people by the preachers; but it is also true that great numbers of their brethren were equally averse to it. The cause of the change was the deep religious want felt by the people, and at their continued importunity the sacraments were at length introduced.

Two parties were affected by Robinson's project: the clergy on the one hand, and the Methodist preachers and people on the other. How would it, in its practical operation, have affected the clergy? It was not the ruin of Methodism that was asked for, but its restoration to primitive purity. We must assume, then, that it would still exist with all its apparatus of means, for awakening sinners and building up believers, in full and vigorous operation. Would this independent agency be agreeable to the Church? An excellent writer at the time ably stated the case: "There would then be Societies uncontrolled by any of the parish clergy; preachers unappointed by either bishop, priest, or deacon, and responsible to none of them;

laymen leaders of classes, and therefore spiritual teachers; laymen engaging in spiritual exercises, holding meetings for prayer, visiting the sick, and instructing the ignorant; the Conference, in which neither a bishop, nor any clerical representative of a bishop, could, as such, have a place; a system of doctrines openly and publicly taught in every parish, certainly contradicting the opinions of all the Calvinistic part of the clergy, and not very well harmonizing with those held by a majority of the remainder; great zeal and ardour in religious exercises; occasional revivals of religion, attended sometimes with real disorders, and more often with those which to the clergy would appear to be real ones, and at which they perhaps would, even without cause, startle as enthusiastic. Now this is Primitive Methodism. As many of the members of Society as could be persuaded would receive the sacrament at church, and our service in church hours would be given up. These would be the advantages to the Church, and these would be all the advantages to be set against an intimate acquaintance with so troublesome a system. Now, we put it to any bishop, rector, vicar, or curate, throughout the kingdom, whether he wishes Methodism, in this its 'primitive' character and state, to be recognised and formally patronized by the Church? The answer is obvious to all the world. He would not. And he would determine wisely: for the two systems, though they may be made friendly to each other, by liberal and candid administration, can never become one, nor can they operate in direct connexion. How profound, then, is the folly of speaking of a return to primitive Methodism being promoted and patronized by the Church! Primitive Methodism is, in fact, not the thing wanted; it is modified and altered Methodism; and if so, then surely we ought to know

what we are required to give up, and what to modify. Methodism, without its preachers, without its lay leaders, and its lay prayer-meetings; without its peculiar doctrines and its distinct discipline; that is, Methodism annihilated and non-existent, is that only which is capable of being the object of this notable scheme."

Finding their efforts to alter the position of the whole Connexion fruitless, Robinson and his friends seceded, and formed a separate Society, under the name of Church Methodists. The object of the correspondence with the separatists in Ireland was partially gained. A minister, then connected with the "Primitives," came over to carry out Robinson's project. He addressed a large assembly at the Town Hall in Beverley; and through the united exertions of the party, a chapel was raised at the neighbouring village of Cherry Burton, which was opened for religious worship in August, 1825. Robinson, however, soon found that his new friends did not agree with him in his ecclesiastical views: so they separated. The issue of this strange effort was worthy of the consistency and wisdom of its origin and progress. Robinson proceeded very diligently to elaborate his new Church Methodist system, and in due course it was completed and published. But, unfortunately, by the time this was done, all his followers had forsaken him; and, as was wittily said at the time, "the religious public had the ludicrous spectacle before them of a king in Zion, hawking about his constitution, but unable to procure a single subject who would bend his neck to his petty yoke."

The impracticable character of this scheme was known to every Methodist possessing any tolerable acquaintance with the Connexion to which he belonged; and, consequently, Robinson's laboured pamphlet and extensive

correspondence did little more than disturb for a while the peace of some of his acquaintances in the neighbourhood of Beverley. The pamphlet, however, was of sufficient importance to call forth two very able replies from Methodist laymen; the first from Mr. Charles Welch, the other from Dr. Sandwith. The pamphlet, and the commendation which it received in the columns of the "Christian Guardian," also elicited very elaborate and talented reviews from the pen of Richard Watson, in the "Wesleyan Methodist Magazine." Although we might feel disposed to pity the man whose mistaken zeal led him to propound an impossible and unworthy project, we cannot shut our eyes to the utter disregard of Christian principle in the earnest efforts, secretly put forth, to revolutionize a system which the party professed publicly to uphold, and with which he was still connected as a member and an office-bearer. Such conduct merits the severest reprobation.

The Rev. Henry Moore, as president of the last British Conference, went to Ireland to preside over the next annual assembly of preachers in that island. He was greatly cheered by the improved state of the Irish Societies. The painful depression spread over preachers and people by the long-continued agitation, and the extensive schism which followed, had now passed away. A cheerful tone, and high expectation of coming good, were observable everywhere. While there, Mr. Moore received a donation from Mrs. Brackenbury, "for the distressed of Ireland," and returned greatly pleased with his visit.

Rev. Henry Moore presides at the Irish Conference. Improved state of Methodism in Ireland.

The Conference for the year 1824 was held in Leeds, and the interest felt in its proceedings was intense. The Rev. Robert Newton was called to the chair, and the Rev. Jabez

The Conference of 1824. Robert Newton president.

Increase in
number of
preachers.

Bunting appointed secretary. Upwards of three hundred and sixty ministers were present; and an immense number of members and friends attended from the surrounding country, some from a considerable distance. The religious services were well attended; even the early morning preaching collected such large congregations, that, on one occasion, the Albion Street chapel was crowded at five o'clock; and it was necessary to preach in the open air to those who could not find admission.

The extension of the work in the home Circuits was fully shown by the fact, that thirty-six additional preachers were called out; and some of them were employed in districts of the country hitherto in the greatest spiritual destitution. This increase was the utmost limit to which the Conference could reasonably consent to extend the number of ministers.

Rev. Messrs.
Reece and
Hannah re-
port their
visit to
America.

The sittings of this Conference were rendered very interesting by the statements of the Rev. Messrs. Reece and Hannah, just returned from their mission as the representatives of the British Conference to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States. Their tidings of the progress and prospects of Methodism in America, and of the affectionate feelings with which the American Methodists regarded the progress of the work in Britain, excited in the Conference lively pleasure and gratitude to God.

Sudden
death of the
Rev. Miles
Martindale.
His funeral.

The cases are rare in which a Methodist minister has been called to his reward during his actual attendance at the Conference. A deep gloom, however, was thrown over that assembly this year by such an event. The Rev. Miles Martindale was suddenly taken away from his family, and from an important sphere of labour, in the second week of the session. In very early life he had deep

convictions of his sinfulness; and often "in dreams and visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men," the Lord opened his ear to instruction. A removal to Liverpool, and a comparatively early marriage, brought him under the influence of Methodist preaching. His desires after salvation soon became more intense; and on Easter Sunday, while commemorating the death of Christ in the holy Sacrament of the Supper, he rested on Jesus, and obtained a sense of God's gracious favour. Soon after his conversion he was employed as a home missionary in the hundred of Worrall, in Cheshire. Two benevolent gentlemen defrayed the expenses of his maintenance. His successful labours in this preparatory work pointed him out as suitable to be employed in the Christian ministry. In a short time he was called to the performance of these sacred duties, and for twenty-seven years he made full proof of his holy calling in the toilsome work of Circuit life. He was then appointed "governor of Woodhouse-Grove School." In this seminary for "the sons of the prophets," he fulfilled his duty with great ability, and was esteemed as a friend and father by the boys. Disinterested, peace-loving, humble, and devout, he gained the respect and affection of all who knew him. By diligent application "he acquired a very considerable knowledge of the classics and modern history, of theology in all its branches;" and, in fact, of everything that was calculated to improve his mind and qualify him for the important station in which Providence had placed him. After completing his thirty-eighth year of ministerial service, he left the Grove to attend the Leeds Conference, where, in a few days, he was seized by cholera, and departed to his reward in great peace, August sixth. He was buried in the sight of his brethren, who suspended their session to attend his funeral; and the tears of his

family and of the boys of the school bedewed the good man's grave.

Mr. Robert
Spence of
York : his
life, charac-
ter, and
death.

During the sittings of this assembly, also, an eminent Wesleyan layman was removed by death,—Robert Spence, who attained distinction as a bookseller in the city of York. He began life in very humble circumstances. His father, a blacksmith in the village of Stillington, near York, died when Robert was sixteen months old, leaving a wife and family in a very destitute condition. The celebrated sentimental Sterne then rector of Sutton, held the living of Stillington in connexion with his rectory. While Robert was very young, he was taken into the parson's family to fill some menial situation ; and his master in some way afforded the poor lad the rudiments of an humble education. Sterne recommended young Spence to a gentleman of rank in the neighbourhood, who took him into his stables, and after a while called him to serve in the family. Robert was thus placed in circumstances as favourable as he had any reason to hope for, and had a fair prospect of passing respectably through the world. He was, however, not destined to walk an unchequered path. He had an elder brother settled in Tadcaster, who, by the ministry of the Methodists, had been brought to a knowledge of the truth. His instruction and exhortation, in repeated letters, led Robert to an earnest concern for salvation. While in this prayerful and penitent state, between fifteen and sixteen years of age, one Easter Sunday Robert attended a lady of the family to one of the churches in York, and, while carrying the books after her to the communion, the Lord revealed Himself to his soul, and he obtained a clear sense of pardoning mercy.

The attainment of religion, however, caused the loss of

his place ; and, as a Methodist, Robert found it impossible to procure another. He was brought into great trouble and distress. But the Lord opened a way of deliverance. In his need and perplexity, he turned his attention to book-binding, and his pious brother paid a small gratuity to a person to instruct him. When the engagement was concluded, that person went to London, entered into the second-hand book trade, and wrote to Spence, in whom he felt an interest, offering to send down a parcel of books, if he thought he could sell them. The offer was accepted, and Robert took his merchandise to market in a clothes-basket. This was the commencement of Mr. Spence's bookselling. Soon afterward, a Mr. Hall, observing his steadiness and good conduct, lent him ten pounds. With this capital Robert enlarged his business, which rose steadily and rapidly into a highly respectable trade. He became an eminent publisher, and acquired such wealth and position, that he was nominated to fill the office of sheriff of the city of York, and paid a fine of one hundred pounds rather than assume its dignity and discharge its duties. Though raised to wealth and station, and enjoying both in a high degree to the day of his death, he remained to the end of his course an humble, pious, devoted Christian ; a sound-hearted, earnest, and zealous Wesleyan Methodist.

Brunswick chapel, Leeds, a handsome and commodious edifice, was now in course of erection. The foundation stone was laid, April twenty-sixth, 1824, by the Rev. George Marsden, who delivered an address to nearly five thousand persons, assembled to witness the ceremony. It was opened for divine service on Friday and Sunday, September ninth and eleventh, 1825. The officiating ministers were Clarke, Bunting, Marsden, Lessey,

Building
and opening
of Brun-
swick chapel,
Leeds.

and William Dawson. Services were also held in the other chapels; and the aggregate collection, including some supplementary contributions, was one thousand pounds.

The trustees of Wakefield West Parade chapel had availed themselves of the permission of the Conference, and erected an organ in that place of worship. It was opened on Sunday, January tenth, 1825, with religious services conducted by Robert Newton. On that occasion, the preacher remarked on the high tone of feeling and extensive liberality which he had recently witnessed in Manchester. The Methodists of that town had, he said, determined on the erection of five commodious chapels. He observed, that he had seen seven hundred pounds subscribed for that object in seven minutes, and that the subscriptions had reached five thousand pounds. These chapels were during the year in course of erection.

Parliamentary discussion on colonial slavery. Hopeful character of Mr. Canning's resolutions.

The missionaries of the several Protestant Societies employed in the West Indies had so successfully prosecuted their labours, and the enormous iniquity of keeping Christian men and women in perpetual bondage was so fully exhibited to the people and Parliament of this country, that the continuance or abolition of colonial slavery became the question of the day.

The deeply serious nature of the struggle was recognised in the early history of the Wesleyan Missionary Society; and the utmost caution was used in drawing up instructions for the conduct of its agents, so that they might not, under any circumstances, step beyond their proper province as ministers of religion. At the same time, although it was seen that the introduction of the Christian faith on the

Negroes was likely to render the maintenance of colonial slavery impossible, it was determined to follow, with all fidelity and zeal, the course marked out by the command of the Saviour, and to preach the Gospel to this debased and injured portion of humanity, leaving the consequences to those responsible for the support and results of the system.

That consistent and zealous friend of oppressed Africans, Fowell Buxton, brought the condition of our colonial slaves under the consideration of the House of Commons on the fifteenth of May, 1823. After two days' debate, the House unanimously approved a series of resolutions proposed by Mr. Canning, the organ of the government. These resolutions declared it expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for ameliorating the condition of the slave population; and from a determined and persevering, but judicious and temperate, enforcement of such measures, the House anticipated such a progressive improvement in the condition of the Negroes, as would prepare them for a participation in the civil rights and privileges enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty's subjects. These resolutions were the death-warrant of British colonial slavery. All discerning men, whether earnestly desiring the removal of this outrage on religion and humanity, or deeply interested, from pecuniary or other motives, in its maintenance, saw from this action of the British Parliament, that the removal of the evil was now in fact determined. The intense feeling excited by the judicial murder of missionary Smith, and the outrages in Barbadoes, heightened as it was by the parliamentary debates on these iniquities, did much to strengthen the public detestation of slavery, and to foster an earnest desire for the emancipation of its victims.

It was, however, notwithstanding this strong and general judgment and feeling, evidently a difficult work to achieve Negro emancipation. Slavery had been so long regarded as a necessary institution in our extensive colonial possessions, was so largely incorporated into our legislation, and continued to be a source of pecuniary emolument to so many of the wealthy and powerful, that its removal was opposed by the most formidable obstacles.

Origin and
object of the
Anti-slavery
Society : its
first anni-
versary.

A deep conviction of the extent and power of this opposition led to the formation of a Society for the mitigation and gradual abolition of slavery, by the gentlemen most deeply interested in this object. This Society, afterward so well known as "the Anti-slavery Society," was instituted in 1823, and held its first anniversary, June twenty-fifth, 1824. His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester presided. Among the distinguished persons who supported the cause of injured and oppressed humanity, we find the name of Thomas Babington Macaulay, (then in his twenty-fourth year,) whose youthful advocacy, it is said, "will be read with more than ordinary pleasure." This was Jabez Bunting's judgment on the opening career of him who afterwards filled so large a space in the literary and political history of England, as Lord Macaulay. Richard Matthews, barrister-at-law, a distinguished Wesleyan, was one of the first secretaries of this very useful Society.

Effects pro-
duced by
this Society
on Messrs.
Watson and
Bunting :
their con-
duct.

The early action of this important agency excited conflicting feelings in the minds of the chief directors of the Wesleyan missionary operations. Watson clearly saw, that if the tone and measures of the Anti-slavery Society should be violent, its action might involve the missionaries and their congregations in the West Indies in the most serious calamities. Occupying, as he did, the place of corresponding secretary of the Methodist Missionary Society

and consequently being the person to whom the missionaries and their people had to look for counsel and direction, he hesitated some time before he connected himself with the movement. Bunting, being free from official responsibility, and influenced by an equally clear judgment, and, probably, by greater courage, associated himself with the Society soon after its formation, and fearlessly denounced West Indian slavery in the "Wesleyan Magazine." A short time sufficed to remove Watson's hesitation. When the first Report was published, the principles it enunciated, and the course of action it marked out, commended themselves to his hearty approval. He drew up an able paper for the "Magazine," in which he calls it, "this truly patriotic and Christian Society." "The Society," he observes, "has, in the strife and struggle of prejudices and passions, excited by the great questions arising out of the slavery existing in so many of our colonies, been greatly misrepresented, and assailed with coarse and disgraceful virulence. Its objects are now, however, most fairly before the public, and they will be found to be of a kind from which, we are persuaded, no sound politician, no real friend to the country and her colonies,—to say nothing of the higher considerations of humanity and religion,—can withhold his cordial assent, and in which such an one can hesitate to co-operate." *

The operations of this and other collateral agencies, salutary as they were, not only made the position of the leaders of the Missionary Societies at home very difficult, but also greatly embarrassed the missionaries abroad. This was particularly the case in Jamaica. Goaded to excessive sensibility by the malignity and calumny with which they were so unjustly, but so

Some missionaries in Jamaica adopt and publish very unwise resolutions respecting colonial slavery.

* JACKSON'S "Life of Watson," p. 397.

perseveringly, assailed, some of them, with the chairman of the District at their head, assembled, and passed a series of resolutions, setting forth their views respecting the bearing of Christianity towards slavery as it existed in the West Indies; repudiating all connexion between themselves and the advocates of emancipation in England, and deprecating, in strong terms, the abolition of slavery, as "injurious to the slaves, unjust to the proprietors, and ruinous to the colonies." It will, of course, excite great surprise that men in such a position should have committed themselves so rashly; but it is still more strange that these few missionaries, not only agreed to these unwise resolutions, but advertised them in the colonial papers, and sent copies of them to the heads of the several departments of government in the island, to the members of Council, and of the House of Assembly; thus placing before all the civil and military authorities their opinions as those of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

These resolutions disavowed by the Committee at home, who adopt the most effectual measures to counteract their influence.

On the receipt of this document at the Mission House in London, a meeting of the general Committee was called, the subject was carefully considered, and the views of the Committee were exhibited in a very able paper, which, with the signatures, of the secretaries was published in the Methodist Magazine, and copies sent to Earl Bathurst, his majesty's secretary for the colonies, and to the Duke of Manchester, the governor of Jamaica. The Committee on behalf of the Missionary Society declared, that they had no information of the number of missionaries who attended the meeting, that they had reason to think it was a very partial one, and not a regularly summoned meeting of the District. For this and other weighty reasons, the Jamaica resolutions were declared to be a violation of the rules under which the

missionaries were bound to act, and were disavowed by the Committee on the part of the Missionary Society. The Committee then proceeded to set forth, in very able and luminous paragraphs, the views really entertained by the Society as to the relation of Christianity to slavery; the injustice of the language of the resolutions in regard to the advocates for the abolition of slavery; and, finally, an earnest protest against the assumption, that the resolutions exhibited the sense of the Society or of its missionaries in general; declaring that these had always, like the venerable Founder of Methodism, regarded slavery as "a moral evil, from which the nation was bound ultimately to free itself;" and that if the teaching and conduct of the missionaries for nearly forty years were not sufficient to commend them to the approval of the authorities, the Society "will not seek it in any case by becoming parties to the passions of men, nor suffer their missionaries to become so; they will not compromise the principles of Christianity, in their legitimate exposition, to obtain favour."

The publication of this seasonable document tore from the West India party in England a host of arguments based on the ill-judged resolutions which had called it into existence; and placed the Christian character of the Methodist Missionary Society in its proper aspect before the government and the world. The government, indeed, were anything but pleased with the Committee's exposition of their principles. Earl Bathurst, through his under-secretary, Mr. Wilmot Horton, in a communication to the secretaries, "expressed his fears that evil would ensue in the Colonies from this act of the Committee, and his regret that it should have been deemed necessary." To this communication Watson replied in terms at once polite and firm. He assured the under-secretary that

the document published by the Committee contained nothing but what had been known by all connected with the West Indies for many years; that it was notorious, that the Methodist people and their Missionary Society regarded "slavery in all its forms as utterly inconsistent with the Christian religion; and that, as this had always been the opinion entertained, it was impossible to shrink from an avowal of it in such peculiar circumstances as the committee was placed in at the time." It is considered necessary to record this series of circumstances, in order to show the interest taken by Methodists and their Missionary Society in the early part of the struggle for promoting the abolition of colonial slavery.

The following Conference very carefully reviewed the conduct of the Jamaica missionaries, the resolutions they had published, and the action of the Missionary committee. After a full investigation, the decisions of the Committee were entirely approved, the conduct of the missionaries deplored, and the disciplinary action which had taken place confirmed.

Conference
of 1825. Mr.
Entwisle
president :
his spirit and
piety. Trans-
actions of
the Con-
ference.

The Conference was held in Bristol, July twenty-seventh, 1825. The Rev. Joseph Entwisle was placed in the chair the second time, and the Rev. Jabez Bunting was appointed secretary. Although our history relates entirely to the progress and operations of a religious community, we can but seldom place on record a fair statement of the spirituality and godly devotion which influenced the leaders of the Connexion in their public action. Their outward conduct, connexional measures and legislation, were open to inspection, and have been sufficiently recorded for our purpose. But rarely are we permitted to follow such men into their retirement, to listen to the

secret outgoings of their spirits to God, and to have clear evidence of the real religiousness of their heart and conduct. In this instance, through the excellent Memoir of his father which the Rev. Joseph Entwisle has published, we are enabled to do some justice to this matter. On being appointed president, Entwisle wrote in his private journal, "I esteem the kindness of my brethren next to the approbation of conscience and of God. Yet my mind is impressed with the awful duties and responsibilities of the office. May I discharge them faithfully! I shall regard it as of divine appointment, and confidently look to God for help." And a few days after the close of the sittings we have this entry: "My mind has been deeply impressed this day with the necessity of living nearer to God. As I am now filling the highest station in the Connexion, I ought to be more humble, holy, meek, spiritual, and heavenly in my temper; more a man of God; and I find a strong desire for it. I must—through grace I will—be a man of one business only, having a single eye, a pure intention to please God in every thing, great and small. Lord, help me!"*

All who were favoured with religious intercourse with the late Dr. Bunting have been struck with his remarkable power and unction in prayer. No excellence in his vast and varied range of powers has so much impressed the author of the present work as this. And this power appears to have been eminently drawn forth on the admission of thirty-six young men as probationers for the ministry. Entwisle observes, "Mr. Bunting prayed with uncommon unction; it seemed as if heaven were opened. It was a time much to be remem-

* "Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Entwisle," Second Edition, pp. 330-332.

bered. God was remarkably present: my soul was melted before the Lord. Glory be to God!"

It may serve to show the difficulty of engrafting a wide and effective apparatus of means, like that supplied by the annual Missionary Meetings, on such a system as the Wesleyan Methodist economy, if we mention the various changes made in providing a suitable agency to conduct these meetings. At first, the missionary secretaries and a few other popular preachers went through the principal Districts, and took the leading part in conducting the public meetings; which were soon rendered very interesting, useful, and popular. But when they became general, it was impossible for the secretaries to attend such a number of meetings, and the aid which they could casually procure was unequal to the demand. At the Conference of 1823, it was accordingly resolved, that "in order to diminish in some degree the very serious inconveniences to the good management of the Missions, which have resulted from the frequent absence of the secretaries, to lessen the amount of local expenses at Missionary Meetings, and to divide the work of assisting at such meetings more equally among the brethren, the secretaries are authorized to prepare and carry into effect immediately a plan of visiting by deputations the *principal* auxiliary and branch societies in every part of the kingdom."* In the manner then attempted, this plan was found inapplicable, and at the ensuing Conference it was formally "relinquished," without devising any other means in its stead. The want therefore remained, and throughout the year the difficulty became increasingly felt. The question came before the Conference of 1825: "What measures can be adopted, in order to meet the wishes expressed by several

* Octavo Minutes, vol. v., p. 421.

very respectable Districts, for a more easy and systematic method of procuring suitable assistance at our missionary anniversaries?" The answer was, "The plan of annual deputations shall be again tried; but on a more limited scale than formerly, and with such modifications as, it is hoped, may render it more acceptable and efficient." A series of regulations was laid down for carrying this plan into effect,

The rapid progress of the Connexion is vividly exhibited in the surprise of the president at the multiplicity of his duties. Only thirteen years had elapsed since he held the same high office; but he exclaimed, as in amaze, "Never were my head and hands so full of public concerns as now. Since the Conference," (and he writes on the first of November,) "I have been at Liverpool, Warwick, Worcester, Loughborough, Wednesbury, and Evesham; and to-morrow, if God will, I go to London on public business. My correspondence, too, is extensive, and often of a nature that requires deep thought. I am astonished at the accumulation of the business of the president since I was in office before."

On the twenty-seventh of November in this year, the venerable William Warrener finished his long and arduous course of Christian service. And who was WILLIAM WARRENER? The name, alas! is all but unknown to the present generation of Methodists. It calls up no reminiscences of splendid intellect or lofty official station; it reminds us of no literary performance of high or low degree. Yet we cannot pass it over in silence. It has a charm which compels us to linger in our narrative, and to offer our meed of praise. He who bore it was the forerunner of that "noble army" of faithful men sent out as Methodist missionaries to the heathen. We deeply regret that his memory has been committed to the keeping of a mere "recent death"

Death of
Rev. W.
Warrener.

in the Magazine, and a scant "obituary" in the Conference Minutes, instead of being embalmed in a more worthy and extended memoir. His early life and character, the manner of his conversion to God, and the circumstances under which he entered the ministry, are now, we fear, past recall. In some way or other he was brought under the notice of the venerable Wesley; and in 1779 he is found in the list of "itinerant preachers," and appointed to the Gainsborough Circuit. At the Conference of 1786, he was appointed to the mission work in the Island of Antigua, where a Society had already been formed by the labours of Nathaniel Gilbert and John Baxter; the one a native of the island, and the other an English local preacher employed in the dockyard there. Warrener sailed with Dr. Coke and two other brethren, who were to be employed in Nova Scotia and Newfoundland. But "the wind was contrary;" and instead of gaining the American shore, the vessel was driven to Antigua, the place of Warrener's destination. He remained eleven years among his sable flock, and saw their numbers in the various West India Islands increased from one thousand five hundred and sixty-nine, to seven thousand three hundred and ninety-three. In 1797 he returned to his own country, and resumed the work of an English Circuit. As was meet, though the coincidence is somewhat remarkable, he was the first Methodist missionary who addressed one of our noble public gatherings for the spread of the Gospel among the heathen. In seconding the first of the EIGHTEEN resolutions passed at that memorable meeting in Leeds, which inaugurated a new era in our missionary movements, we are told that "the personal acquaintance of the speaker with Missions, and several pleasing anecdotes of their civil, moral, and religious utility, gave his speech a peculiar interest, and served to bring out the subject before the

meeting in the most satisfactory manner." In 1818 the increasing infirmities of age compelled him to retire from the toils and responsibilities of the active ministry. But in that retirement he was ever about his Master's business, preaching, visiting, and leading Classes to the very last. In November, 1825, his end drew near. His last days, though full of painfulness, were spent

"In humble prayer and fervent praise,"

and in exhorting all around him to yield themselves to God. Even when delirious, his mind still clung to this "loved employ," until his sanctified spirit was released from its prison, and admitted to the presence of his Lord.

We know not whether, in his last moments, the good man ever meditated upon what God had wrought since the day that he stood as the solitary missionary appointment of Methodism to the heathen. But if he did, he must have been cheered with the thought that more than fifty Stations,—embracing India, Ceylon, Australia, New Zealand, Tonga, Madagascar, Africa,—West and South,—as well as most of the West India Islands,—had become occupied by a noble band of nearly one hundred devoted missionaries; and that a glorious harvest of twenty-eight thousand converts had been gathered from the wastes of heathenism into the garner of the church.

The Missions were generally prosperous, and favoured in many places with special visitations from on high; but the anniversary of the Society, was deeply clouded by a report that several missionaries had perished in the wreck of a mail-boat in the West Indies. Although full particulars of this calamity had not then been received, enough was known to fill the heart of every lover of Missions with the deepest affliction. When the sad details arrived, it was

Death of five missionaries in the wreck of "Maria" mail-boat.

ascertained that all the missionaries stationed on the island of Antigua, Messrs. White, Oke, Jones, Truscott, and Hillier, had gone to St. Christopher's, to attend the usual District Meeting, as had the ministers from the other islands in the District; that Mrs. White and her children accompanied her husband; Mrs. Truscott, with one child, and Mrs. Jones, were also of the party. The District Meeting was harmonious, and was rendered solemn by the death of Mr. Gilgrass, who, though in health at the beginning, and able to take part in the business of the session, died before it was closed, after having laboured in the West Indies with great devotedness and success for eighteen years. The devotional services on the occasion of his interment were peculiarly rich in divine unction, and accompanied with blessed results.

The business of the meeting having closed, the Antigua missionaries, with their wives, children, and two servants, accompanied by Mr. Hyde, the missionary stationed at Montserrat, set sail on their return, touched at the latter island, landed Mr. and Mrs. Hyde, and thence proceeded toward Antigua; but the weather, previously boisterous, became so very violent, that the captain resolved returning to Montserrat, which was accomplished in safety. Here, the heavy weather continuing, they remained there four days. Desirous of returning to their post of duty, the missionaries consulted the captain of the missionary schooner, as to the propriety of again embarking. He gave it as his opinion that with such weather he was not likely to reach Antigua in less than four days. This induced the party to abandon the attempt; but, anxious to reach home as soon as possible, they agreed to take their passage in the "Maria" mail-boat, to sail that evening for Antigua;

which, being a superior vessel and a fast sailer, would, it was hoped, take them quickly and safely to their destination.

They left Montserrat on Monday evening. That night and the following day, the weather was very boisterous, and the state of the passengers, from the violence of the storm, was distressing; but the vessel made her way, and toward sunset they had so neared Antigua, as to give all on board a hope of sleeping that night on shore. But, alas! about seven o'clock the cry of "Breakers a-head!" was heard; and although every means was promptly adopted to avert the catastrophe, the vessel immediately struck on a dangerous reef of rocks. The boat was washed from the deck; and the vessel having filled, all the passengers had to be on deck, where the sea incessantly broke over them. In this state of suffering and peril they remained, nearly to their waists in water, calling on Him who was alone able to save. In the course of the night, the vessel broke up, and plunged all who were clinging to the rails of the quarter-deck—Mr. and Mrs. White, with their three children, Mr. and Mrs. Truscott and their boy, the two servants, and Mrs. Jones—into the sea. Mr. Jones, being next his wife, laid hold of her, and, by a desperate effort, drew her to the part of the vessel on which he stood, and which still held together.

Fearful as this scene was, there is a moral sublimity in it which words cannot describe. Whilst their dear children were perishing around them, and sending forth agonizing cries, Mr. and Mrs. White, and Mr. and Mrs. Truscott, resigning themselves to the will of God, cried to their companions on the wreck, "Farewell; the Lord bless you!" and they in return repeated the affecting "Farewell!" The drowning persons were heard crying to God, until buried in the mighty waters; and those on the wreck also continued to lift up their voices in prayer. The

captain now entreated all who still remained on board to come nearer to the head of the vessel, as that part was likely to hold together longest ; encouraging them with the hope that, if they could keep their position until morning, they would be seen from Goat Hill Battery, and rescued. With the waves still breaking over them and threatening instant destruction, this dark and terrible night passed away. The morning came ; but the waves dashed so violently over the reef, that no eye saw the poor sufferers. They could discern persons quietly walking up and down on the shore, and vessels and boats passed at some distance during the day ; but all the efforts of those on the wreck to make themselves seen or heard were in vain. Without shelter, food, or drink, the day wore away, and another night approached.

During the awful sufferings of this period, the missionaries were aroused, and their attention diverted from their own pains and dangers, by the religious distress of the captain and sailors, who, alarmed at their impending fate, were penitently crying for mercy. They wept and prayed with great earnestness ; and the missionaries and Mrs. Jones directed them to the Lamb of God, and exhorted them to believe on Him as their present and all-sufficient Saviour. Another night passed, and another morning dawned, finding the sufferers reduced in strength by fatigue and want of food. Mr. Hillier attempted to reach the shore by swimming ; and two of the sailors endeavoured to do so on parts of the wreck ; but they all perished. The survivors passed another night ; and on the following day, the weather being much milder, Mr. Oke was drowned in the attempt to swim on shore. Mr. Jones died, worn out by pain and exhaustion, leaning his head on his wife's shoulder. The captain also died about the same

time. Mrs. Jones held the dead body of her husband to her breast until a wave washed him from her feeble grasp. This day an American captain, whose vessel was entering the harbour, observed some persons on the wreck, and reported it on his arrival in the port. Mr. Kentish, agent for Lloyd's, accompanied by another gentleman, put off in a boat, and, on reaching the wreck, found Mrs. Jones alive, but weak and insensible. They conveyed her to Mr. Kentish's house, where, by the utmost exertions of the most humane and devoted medical and nursing care, she was restored. As soon as Mrs. Jones had acquired sufficient strength, she sailed for England, and arrived in safety, but in a state of great weakness, at Hastings. We may add, that after a widowhood of between six and seven years, she was married to C. Hincksman, Esq., of Preston, being then about thirty years of age. She lived a life of devoted piety, and died happy in God, April seventeenth, 1859.

By this calamitous occurrence, Mrs. Hillier was left a widow with five children, and the island of Antigua without a single Methodist missionary. The effect on the bereaved Societies, devotedly attached as they were to their ministers, cannot be told. The way of the Lord is often darkness to the short-sighted children of men; but His ways are right. The chairman of the District made the best possible arrangements for the temporary supply of the chapels, and urgent application was sent to the committee at home for special aid in this season of calamity and deep distress. That help was speedily supplied; and, after a short time, the mission rallied.

From the first appointment of Methodist preachers to the Shetland Isles in 1823, Dr. Adam Clarke took a deep interest in the undertaking, and obtained, from his personal friends and others, considerable subscriptions toward the

Dr. Adam
Clarke's
visit to the
Shetland
Isles.

support of the preachers and the erection of chapels on these destitute isles. At the ensuing Conference it was resolved to honour and to use the venerable Doctor's interest in this pious undertaking to the utmost. After the Stations of the Shetland District, in the Minutes of 1824, this note is found: "Dr. Adam Clarke is requested to correspond regularly with the preachers in the Shetland Isles, and to give them such advices and directions as he may deem necessary. Dr. Clarke is also authorized to receive donations for the chapels, and for the support of the preachers, in those islands; which donations shall be regularly paid, on account, to the treasurer of the Contingent Fund." This minute was repeated every year during Dr. Clarke's life. The oversight of Methodism on these isles was therefore made his personal business, not more by special official appointment than by adoption and choice.

Under these combined influences Dr. Clarke felt an anxious wish to see the people whose spiritual interests had called forth so many of his prayers, and so much of his attention and solicitude. In the latter part of May, 1826, he went to Scotland, with the view of gratifying himself in promoting the work of God in Shetland; and on Tuesday, June thirteenth, he embarked from Leith, and reached Shetland on the Saturday. He was heartily welcomed by the preachers, who were anxiously expecting his arrival. The Doctor remained in the island nearly three weeks, preaching in the several chapels, meeting the Societies, making arrangements for the supply of preachers for the ensuing year, and holding numerous conversations with the people. His own account of the last Sabbath services which he conducted there, is an affecting record of the labours of a minister sixty-five years of age, who had exposed himself to considerable danger, and very great

physical and mental exertion. "I preached this morning to a very large and deeply attentive congregation, from Luke xiii. 23, 24: 'Are there few that be saved?' and in the evening again from Rom. xv. 4: 'Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning,' &c. The throng was immense; but, as the evening was fine, more than a hundred heard distinctly through the windows, &c. I was so much exhausted as to be obliged to call for a glass of water to be brought me into the pulpit. I have risked my life in coming this journey; I have expended all my strength in labours while in these islands; and I hear that I am to sail off to-morrow morning. O, may God grant me a speedy and prosperous passage; for I do feel that I cannot bear much hardship! Father, Thy will be done. Amen."* On Friday the Doctor sailed, and reached Aberdeen in safety on the following Tuesday.

The Rev. Charles Atmore died July first, 1826. He was president of the Conference in 1811, and a highly respected and esteemed minister. Called into the ministry by the venerable Founder of Methodism ten years before his death, he took a prominent part in all the difficulties and deliberations which resulted from the removal of Wesley. Uniformly pious, fervent, and zealous, he shrank from no labour or responsibility, and continued to maintain an unblemished reputation as a minister and a Christian, during a period of forty-four years in which he was actively employed. Increasing affliction obliged him to retire from the work as a Circuit minister at the Conference of 1825; and before the next annual assembly of his brethren, full of faith, hope, and love, he passed from the church on earth to the assembly around the throne.

Death of
Rev. Charles
Atmore: his
life and cha-
racter.

* "Life of Dr. Adam Clarke," by his daughter, (one vol. 8vo.) p. 439.

Conference
of 1826.
Richard
Watson pre-
sident. Af-
fecting cir-
cumstance.

The Conference of 1826 was held in Liverpool, when the Rev. Richard Watson was placed in the chair. Several circumstances united to invest this appointment with special interest. It was in this town, thirteen years before, that Watson had been received as a local preacher in the Wesleyan Society, after his retirement from the New Connexion. Then his admission into the ranks of the local preachers was opposed with much prejudice; now, with unanimous feeling and cordial delight, he was seen taking his place at the head of the Wesleyan ministry. It was the Rev. Joseph Entwisle who, in 1813, took Watson by the hand, recommended him to the Local Preachers' Meeting, and, by his kind and Christian advocacy, secured his admission into that body. Now, the same venerable minister, as the ex-president, transfers the seal of office to his former client and devoted friend, and inaugurates him into the highest office in the Connexion. No doubt these circumstances, which were widely known at the time, were deeply affecting to both these eminent men, and must have invested the transaction with general and peculiar interest. It is worthy of remark that although Watson, when called to the chair, was in very delicate health, he was enabled to attend the long sittings of the Conference, and to discharge the arduous duties of his high office not only without injury, but with "improved health, and a hallowed cheerfulness and recollectedness of spirit. This he piously attributed to the faithful fervent prayers of his brethren on his behalf."

Important
resolutions
respecting
Sunday
Schools.

The spiritual interests of the numerous Methodist Sunday Schools engaged the careful attention of this Conference; and the inquiry to which this gave rise led to the adoption of a series of important conclusions, which were placed

on record. The schools are shown to be an important part of the pastoral charge, because they “ought to be strictly and entirely religious institutions, and should be connected, as closely as possible, with the church of Christ.” In order to promote an improvement in this direction, a committee was formed, to draw up a general outline of Rules and Regulations for the Methodist Sunday Schools throughout the Connexion.

The Committee presented their Report to the ensuing Conference in a carefully digested body of principles and rules, drawn up chiefly by Mr. Bunting. They afford important information and safe guidance respecting the object and management of these useful institutions, and are admirably adapted to preserve our Sabbath Schools from those dangers and evils into which many of them were hurried in earlier times. The Conference, having received the Report, cordially thanked the Committee, declared their entire approval of its principles, and fully adopted the general rules and recommendations which it contained. This plan was accordingly made obligatory on all new schools to be afterward formed; and was strongly recommended for adoption in the schools already in operation.

The increase of members in the home Societies this year being small, serious attention was again turned to the means necessary for reviving and promoting the work of God; and the “Liverpool Minutes” were ordered to “be read at full length in every Annual District Meeting, and made the occasion of suitable inquiries, conversation, and prayer.” A careful, and even a jealous, inquiry into the state of a religious community is always justifiable and proper; especially when there is less than the usual rate of progress. But there are ample reasons for concluding that

Small increase in numbers. Unprecedented commercial distress.

the commercial crisis through which the country passed during the preceding winter, in the vast extent of embarrassment and suffering it had occasioned, and its terrible effects in paralysing important industrial occupations, was quite sufficient to account for the check which the prosperity of the Connexion experienced. Perhaps never before in the history of the world had a country sustained such a financial prostration. Throughout 1824 and the former part of 1825, every trade seemed buoyant. Money being abundant, and credit easily obtained, rash and extensive over-trading and wild speculation followed, and in due time produced their natural results. Speculations failed, large issues of paper money were returned, the persons liable could not meet the demands made on them, and their ruin was inevitable. The fall of one bank brought down others, and one commercial firm often involved many more in its ruin, until the panic became general. In November, 1825, the number of bankrupts gazetted was one hundred and eighty-eight; December, two hundred and twenty; January, (1826,) three hundred and twenty-one; February, three hundred and eighty; and March, three hundred and fifteen. On the fourth of the last-named month, ninety-three bankruptcies were announced! From this time, by the efforts of the Bank of England and others, the ruin was stayed. It is difficult to convey any idea of the wide-spread misery produced by these terrible failures, or of the sad effects which resulted to the religious interests of the country.

After the close of the Conference, Watson had, amongst other presidential duties, to send from his List of Reserve supplies for any Circuit where a preacher might be laid aside. One letter written for this purpose, and from its date probably the first, is worthy of insertion in a

History of Methodism ; we therefore give the laconic but weighty and important epistle in a note.*

Rumours had for some time been prevalent, that some serious injury, if not death, had befallen Mr. Threlfall, a very devoted and promising young missionary in South Africa. These rumours were now confirmed by most melancholy details. Threlfall was a young man of great amiability, who had been converted, and called to the ministry in England. Having, in the most serious and solemn manner, devoted "his life and blood" to the missionary cause, in the year 1822, he was sent to South Africa, where he evinced remarkable aptitude in the acquisition of the barbarous languages, and preached the Gospel, with great fidelity and success, for about three years. In July, 1825, he proposed to Barnabas Shaw, his superintendent, a journey to the northern parts of Great Namaqualand, for the purpose of opening up access to the native tribes resident there. Accompanied by a zealous native missionary, Jacob Links, and a pious native convert, Johannes Jager, he started in the direction of the Fish River. Mr. Shaw received a letter from him, dated July fourth, in which he spoke of having encountered considerable difficulties in the journey ; and stated, that he should have been inclined to give up the attempt, had it not been for the pious determination of his native com-

The missionary Threlfall and two native Christians assassinated in Africa.

* "MY DEAR SIR,

"LONDON, *August 16th*, 1826.

"You will be kind enough to proceed to assist Mr. —, as soon after the twenty-fourth instant as possible, so as to be there by Sunday, the twenty-seventh. As your expenses will be paid by a sick preacher, you will see the propriety of travelling as frugally as possible ; and in entering upon this work, give yourself wholly to it and to the Lord. Be a diligent student of the Scriptures, and of the theology of the heart. Avoid the frippery rhetoric which some affect ; and aim at being a Wesleyan,—that is your calling. Remember that your business is not to shine, but to win souls."

panions, who “appeared to be going on this journey with something of the same feelings that the apostles of Christ had after their baptism from above.” Soon afterward, reports reached Mr. Shaw that Threlfall and his companions had been murdered; but as similar rumours were by no means uncommon, they were not seriously regarded. After a short time, however, some receipts which Threlfall had given for oxen he had purchased, were brought to Mr. Shaw. On the back of one of them was a memorandum in which the travellers were described as having been severely harassed, and placed in great danger; but, it was added, “Don’t be uneasy about us. We all feel often much comforted in our souls, and the Lord gives us patience.” Further information, however, revealed the fact, that these three devoted men had been murdered at the instigation, and principally by the hand, of a ruffian Namaqua whom they had engaged as their guide, aided by Bushmen accomplices. Whilst quietly sleeping in a kraal, one of the native Christians was shot, and immediately afterwards the other. Threlfall sprang up, and fled into the bush; but he was wounded by a musket ball, and afterwards pierced by an assagai. The motive which led to these barbarous murders was a desire to possess the clothing and few articles of interest which the Christians had in their possession.

This sad intelligence produced a deep and painful impression on the friends of missions at home and abroad. The Bard of Sheffield tuned his lyre, and poured forth his melancholy lay in some exquisite stanzas on “Perils by the Heathen.” The anticipation, in the last two verses, of “a church of Christ” rising in the very country where these “companions in tribulation” met their fate, has been blessedly realized.

"And must with thee thy slain companions lie,
Unmourn'd, unsung, forgotten, where they fell?
O for the spirit and power of prophecy,
Their life, their death, the fruits of both to tell!
They took the cross, they bore it, they lay down
Beneath it, woke, and found that cross their crown.

"O'er their lost relics, on the spot where guilt
Slew sleeping innocence, and hid the crime,
A church of Christ, amidst the desert built,
May gather converts to the end of time;
And there with them their kindred, dust to dust,
Await the resurrection of the just." *

The treacherous guide and murderer fled to his own country, but was subsequently brought to justice, and executed without showing any signs of penitent regret.

* MONTGOMERY'S "Poetical Works," p. 242.

CHAPTER III.

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1827 TO THAT OF 1832.

Conference
of 1827.
Rev. John
Stephens.
Transac-
tions.

THE Conference of 1827 was held in Manchester, when the Rev. John Stephens was placed in the presidential chair. He was in all respects a remarkable man. Born in Cornwall, and in his youth employed in the mines, his mind broke through the surrounding difficulties and darkness. Converted early in life, he at once evinced powers of a superior order, and the influence of decided piety on his character and intellect produced the happiest results. Called to the work of the ministry when little more than twenty years of age, he became a distinguished preacher, and discharged the duties of his office, with credit and usefulness, in some of the most important Circuits. His appointment to the presidency met with the general approval of his brethren, and of the people.

Leeds organ
question.
Review of
the existing
Methodist
polity.

A subject of great importance was brought before this Conference, which ultimately led to a considerable secession from the Connexion. It arose out of an application for the erection of an organ in the new and commodious Brunswick chapel, Leeds; but the consequences which it produced affected the Connexion so extensively, that the subject demands a careful inquiry; which we will introduce by a brief review of the progress of Methodistic organization and polity.

Our previous volumes have shown that Wesley during his life possessed unlimited power in the Connexion, and that he bequeathed that power to the Conference. The

agitations and disputes which followed his death issued in the Plan of Pacification ; and the arrangements then made were sufficient for the exigencies of that period. But every intelligent student of the measures introduced by the "Plan" must perceive that, although it made large concessions, and, as was observed at the time, in some degree, deposited the characters of the preachers in the hands of the office-bearers, by making them judges of their morals, doctrines, and gifts, yet the Conference did not relinquish any part of the power which it previously possessed. The object of the Plan was the introduction of means, by which the misuse, in certain respects, of the power possessed by the preachers might be most effectually guarded against. And this salutary purpose was served, in the circumstances in which the Connexion was then placed, perhaps as fully as could be expected.

But great alterations had taken place between 1797 and 1827. These thirty years had produced most important changes in the state of civil society in the country, and in nothing more than in Methodism. The Methodist preachers had been slowly, but steadily and surely, approximating toward a regular ministerial *status*. We do not mean that they were more truly or fully ministers of the Gospel than formerly ; but that, in the estimation of the Methodist people, and of the public generally, their recognised position and official character, especially during the last ten years, had more nearly approached to that of the ministry among other Christian churches. We neither insinuate nor believe that the Conference acted with a view to this result. A few leading spirits, in advance of their day, probably perceived the desirableness of the change ; and may have employed their individual efforts for its accomplishment. But the general

result was rather the natural and inevitable growth of circumstances, than the consequence of any human contrivance.

It appeared desirable, therefore, that corresponding measures should be taken to place the laity in a position in which they could render more effectual co-operation with their ministers. This was partially done by the incorporation of the lay element into the financial committees. But although this wise measure was doubtless regarded as sufficient, at least for the times then present, after events show that it failed to meet the want fully. And, while it is possible that a close attention to the spiritual progress and evangelical agencies of the Societies might have left the mechanism of Methodist polity in some respect defective, it is certain that causes were in operation in the country calculated to test to the utmost the accuracy of the equipoise presumed to exist in the Methodist economy.

Progress of
political
liberalism,
and sceptical
licentious-
ness.

Liberal principles in politics and commerce were making great progress. The narrow, exclusive system of government which had long prevailed was shaken. The short premiership of Canning introduced, or fostered, larger and more enlightened views. The Corporation and Test Acts were on the eve of passing away from the statute-book; and various other changes and agencies attested the progress of the national mind in liberality and intelligence. But with all this real advancement there was a noisy and extensive action, fictitious and mischievous. Robert Taylor and others paraded their freethinking opinions before the public eye with blasphemous coarseness and wicked zeal. Wild ultra-republican demagogues harangued the people in our large cities and towns, and scattered broadcast opinions altogether alien from the spirit of Christianity and the genius of our happy constitution.

This pseudo-liberality not only injured the public generally, and especially the labouring classes ; but exerted a very pernicious influence on Methodism. A spirit of insubordination was engendered. The feeling of contempt for authority and the wholesome restraints of law, was naturally transferred from the civil to the ecclesiastical sphere, and more or less infected some of the leaders of religious parties. And if this influence was not very wide in its range, or potent in its agency, it existed as a mischievous element in the public mind.

It is necessary, in giving a faithful history of Methodism, to notice causes which the cursory observer might overlook, but which, when carefully followed out in their action and results, have proved influential for good or for evil. On this account, especial notice must here be taken of Sunday Schools. We have the greatest satisfaction in bearing our testimony, in the strongest terms, to the incalculable good resulting from these institutions. Nor is it from any wish to detract from their excellence, or to qualify this praise, that we refer to some of the evils produced by their imperfect organization in the early period of their existence. Seldom were they strictly and closely united with the ministers and leading officers of the church, as it is now universally admitted they ought always to be. They were more or less isolated, and in many of them the children were seldom, if ever, taken to the public worship. The result was, that the schools were rendered, to a sad extent, irreligious ; and even worse consequences followed. Their management was mostly in the hands of persons comparatively young and energetic. Their course of operation was usually decided in meetings of the teachers, in which unanimity seldom obtained, and differences of opinion often led to warm and earnest debates.

Defective
management
of Sunday
Schools, and
its unhappy
influence.

Parties were sometimes formed : a spirit and usages grew up unfavourable to piety or the cultivation of a “meek and quiet spirit.” As many of the teachers were leaders or local preachers, the meetings of these officers were likely to be affected with the same spirit. A mischievous influence thus spread, which, if not sufficiently evil to excite alarm, was powerful enough to be extensively injurious. In Yorkshire, Cornwall, and many other districts, this was the case. It was not, therefore, without very ample reason, that the Conference of this year propounded a system for the management of all Sunday Schools held in connexion with Methodist chapels, which brought their direction under wise and salutary rules, based on clearly stated scriptural principles, and associated all their meetings with the presence and action of the ministers,—at least, so far as this could be done by formal and authoritative rule.

The case of
the Leeds
Methodist
Sunday
Schools.

These observations apply, with peculiar force, to the painful occurrences in Leeds, to which reference has been made. Several years before the period now under review, Sunday Schools had been formed there under the designation of the New Schools. At first, all the Sunday Schools in the town were conducted in connexion with the Established Church ; and these New Schools were formed by a junction of all the Nonconformists who separated from the old schools, and conducted them in common. After a while, one and another of these bodies formed schools in connexion with their own places of worship, until the Methodists alone were left in entire possession of what were still called the New Schools. In these institutions the Lord’s day was devoted to engagements quite contrary to its proper sanctity, and their general conduct could not be regarded as satisfactory to any religious community.

Although they were now really Methodist schools, the broad character of their original constitution was pleaded as a reason why they should not be brought under the supervision of the Methodist ministry.

Here, then, the evils we have spoken of were found in active operation. As the ministers and sound-hearted friends of Methodism wished to make these schools truly religious, and to have them strictly associated with the Methodist Society and ministry, there were active, energetic, and, it is presumed, eloquent men, who resisted the attempt, and extended their opposition to the ordinary course of action in the Circuit. Several of them were known among their companions by the names of the principal members of opposition in the House of Commons. One was called Lord John Russell; another was known as Mr. Hume; a third, as Mr. Grey Bennett. As these and other persons were active in fomenting discord, and promoting unmethodistic proceedings, a rupture, sooner or later, was imminent. It was supposed that it would take place in the Sunday Schools, where most of the mischief had been engendered; but there was no person of sufficient nerve or position to make the attempt.

The peace of
the Circuit
in danger.

Thus matters stood when a number of the pewholders and members of the congregation presented a request to the trustees, that they would take steps to introduce an organ into Brunswick chapel; and the trustees intended, in due course, to apply to the regular meeting of the District Committee in the ensuing May.

Meanwhile, as early as February twenty-fourth, 1827, the following paragraph from a correspondent appeared in the "Leeds Mercury" newspaper:—"We understand that some of the trustees and seatholders wish to have an organ in the Methodist chapel, Brunswick Street; but as the

Leaders' Meeting, and nearly all the preachers here, both itinerant and local, are opposed to it, the matter will probably be referred to the decision of Conference."

Methodist
laws respect-
ing organs.

This communication was evidently meant to discourage the application, and was doubtless calculated to produce this effect. The principal difficulty, but which, as far as we can learn, was not thought of at the time, arose from the very doubtful state of the laws of Methodism bearing on the case. In 1796, it was enacted that "no organ" should be placed in any chapel "till proposed by the Conference." In accordance with this rule, a few organs had been introduced; and some of these were conducted in a manner so unsatisfactory, that the Conference of 1808, after having discussed the subject, judged "it expedient to refuse, after this present year, their sanction or consent to the erection of any organ in any of our chapels." Intermediately, however, the Conference had departed from this purpose, by allowing an organ to be placed in Brunswick chapel, Liverpool. In 1820, the following minute was published: "We think that in some of the larger chapels, where some instrumental music may be deemed expedient in order to guide the congregational singing, organs may be allowed by special consent of the Conference; but every application for such consent shall be first made at the District Meeting, and, if it obtain their sanction, shall be then referred to a committee at the Conference, who shall report their opinion as to the propriety of acceding to the request, and also as to the restrictions with which the permission to erect an organ ought, in that particular case, to be accompanied."

Wish for an
organ in
Brunswick
chapel.

Thus the law of Methodism stood when the erection of an organ in Brunswick chapel, Leeds, was proposed. And although the power of leave to erect an organ was

in the Conference, and it was enacted that this assembly would, before granting it, require the subject to be investigated by the regular May District Committee, and afterward by a special committee at the time of Conference, no mention whatever is made of the party considered the legitimate medium for making the necessary application. There can be no doubt that such an omission was accidental; there could have been no object in it. The trustees, as holding possession of the property, and liable for its debts, would most certainly appear to be the proper party. But then, the Leaders' Meeting, as representing the religious interests of the worshippers, might also be expected to feel some concern in such a question. A third party, however, whose position and office could not possibly afford them any pretext for interference, were the most active in their opposition to the proposed instrument. Whilst the trustees were preparing their application to the District Meeting, the local preachers began an earnest agitation against it, and greatly promoted their object by signing an address to the leaders, for the purpose of stimulating them also to resistance.

Opposition
of local
preachers.

This most unjustifiable interference—for such every intelligent Methodist must pronounce it—exercised a very potent influence. Several of the most active of these local preachers were among the chief Sunday School orators,—the Lord John Russell, Henry Brougham, and other celebrities of that institution. When the May District Meeting arrived, the application of the trustees was decidedly opposed by the Leaders' Meeting, backed by a majority of the local preachers, and many members of Society. Finding that the leaders and local preachers vehemently opposed the application made by the trustees, the District Meeting, by a small majority, refused their

sanction; but, on being informed that the trustees intended to appeal to the Conference, the meeting distinctly consented to such appeal.

Those who
opposed the
organ vio-
lated Metho-
dist law.

Unhappily for the opponents of the organ, they did not keep within the limits of Methodist law, but grievously outraged its spirit and letter in numerous acts of insubordination. Matthew Johnson, a local preacher, assumed the right of convening, by written notices signed with his name, meetings of various official persons; not only without the consent of the superintendent of the Circuit, but, in some cases, even against his explicit warnings. This would have been a great violation of rule, even if the notices had been sent only to office-bearers in his own Circuit, who might be supposed to have a common interest in the subject of dispute. They were, however, also sent to leaders and local preachers in other Circuits; so that dissatisfaction and disorder were disseminated far and wide, and prejudice and discontent excited in persons who were no parties to the matter in dispute. In addition to this very improper course, the opponents not only objected to the erection of the organ as inexpedient, and contrary to their views, but also claimed the rejection of the application as a matter of right, on the ground of their having, at least, a negative on the question by the "Plan of Pacification." This Plan says, that "the sacrament of the Lord's Supper shall not be administered in any chapel, except the majority of the trustees of that chapel on the one hand, and the majority of the stewards and leaders belonging to that chapel (as the best qualified to give the sense of the people) on the other hand, allow of it;" and their strange argument was, that, as the erection of an organ was a much less important matter than the administration of the sacraments, it must be included under the same rule. This was

altogether a perversion of the law. The rules respecting organs were, from the beginning, made and acted on without reference to the Plan of Pacification, the provisions of which had no bearing on the subject.

These erroneous assumptions, and the violent language and action of the objectors, seriously damaged their cause; and in this state of the case the question came before the Conference. The trustees presented their appeal; the Conference decided on hearing it; and referred it to a committee including every preacher who voted against the organ at the District Meeting. Thomas Stanley, who had been superintendent at Leeds the previous year, and was supposed to share the views of the leaders, was also allowed to be heard on their behalf. After the case was considered in committee, a deputation from the leaders arrived, and requested a rehearing of the case in their presence. This was also granted; but, ultimately, the committee decided on recommending that the trustees be allowed to erect an organ in Brunswick chapel, and the Conference received and sanctioned the recommendation of the Report.

The effect of this decision on the Leeds Societies was most distressing. Incited as great numbers of pious persons had been, by inflammatory speeches and violent and scurrilous pamphlets, a great secession took place, and a deep sensation was produced throughout the whole Connexion. Such was the desperate condition of the Leeds Society, that a special District Meeting was assembled, early in December, for the purpose of considering the state of the Societies, and adopting such measures as the emergency required. John Stephens, the president, and Jabez Bunting, the secretary of the Conference, the preachers of the District, with George Marsden, John Burdsall, and Robert Newton, attended.

The Brunswick trustees appeal from the District Committee to the Conference.

The Conference receives the appeal, and gives consent for the organ to be erected. Distressing consequences of this decision. Special District Meeting.

The court, composed of these ministers, proceeded to inquire into the state of the Societies; with full power to redress all grievances, and to settle everything until the next Conference. For the purpose of giving every dissatisfied member of Society full opportunity of stating his grievance, and to afford the committee the opportunity of conversing freely with each, that they might devise the best means of redress, it was arranged to meet each section of office-bearers in both the Leeds Circuits separately. By availing themselves of these opportunities, all who felt aggrieved might have every complaint fully considered. The plan prepared by the superintendents, and of which notice was given to every leader and local preacher, fixed Tuesday, December fourth, for the meeting of all the leaders of the town Society in the East Circuit; Wednesday for the meeting of the local preachers of that Circuit. The forenoon of Thursday was fixed for the meeting of the leaders of the town Society of the West Circuit; the noon the same day for the meeting of the local preachers of that Circuit. All persons who held the office of leader or local preacher at the commencement of these disturbances, were invited to attend. At the time appointed for the first of these meetings, all the members of the Special District Meeting assembled, hoping to meet the leaders in friendly discussion on all the causes of complaint. They were, however, doomed to mortifying disappointment. The complaining leaders, instead of availing themselves of the opportunity of stating their grievances, and having the breach healed, were many of them found in an opposition meeting. They sent a note saying that, as they had "made common cause with the seceding local preachers," they should not meet the District Committee, except in connexion with the said seceders. They further claimed that

Its object
fails through
the factious
conduct of
the seceders.

the leaders and local preachers of the West Circuit should form part of the same meeting. It was impossible for the preachers to assent to such terms. They involved an utter repudiation of the first principles of Methodist polity; which very wisely limit the cognizance of every meeting to its own proper business, and forbid the officers of one Circuit to interfere in the concerns of another.

The District Meeting, however, proceeded to carry out its purpose; and the leaders and local preachers of the East and West Circuits respectively, as many of them at least as pleased to avail themselves of the opportunity, attended. In the discussions, the rampant character of the opposition was fully exhibited. It became quite clear that the organ question was little more than a pretext for the violent and revolutionary language and conduct of the dissentients, which evidently resulted from a settled antagonism to those views of the scriptural character of the pastoral office on which the whole economy of Methodism is founded. The meeting, therefore, concurred in the following resolution:—"This meeting is compelled, with the deepest sorrow and regret, to adopt, as the result of its inquiries and observations, the painful conclusion, that a large portion of the town Society of the Leeds East Circuit is in a state of awful disturbance; and that various evils have been introduced, which must be forthwith counteracted and terminated; either by reclaiming to better views, and more peaceful deportment, those whose conduct has occasioned or protracted these agitations; or, if that object be unhappily unattainable, by removing them from office, or from membership, as their several cases may require."*

The various evils resulting from this disturbed state of the Society were then considered in detail, when it was re-

* "Minutes of the Special District Meeting," p. 5.

solved :—"That this Special District Meeting has listened with the greatest attention to the statements which have been made before it, with the view of justifying the disorderly and violent measures devised and acted on by the combination ; but that while it feels and acknowledges with all readiness the full force of various extenuating circumstances and considerations, which will apply to the case of many who were partially concerned in the late proceedings at an early stage of the dissensions, but who have since acted a faithful and a noble part, it must in justice record its deliberate and unanimous opinion, that the grievances alleged, as having called for those proceedings, and as justifying a persevering in them, are either wholly imaginary, or founded only on mistaken views of the true meaning of our Rules. For the temporary effects of misapprehension and misrepresentation, upon various persons of unquestionable piety and general fidelity to Methodism, this meeting is disposed to make every affectionate and respectful allowance ; but it is called upon to declare that the complaints now brought before it have no support in the laws of our Body, rightly interpreted, and explained by our general practice ; and that, at all events, the grievances alleged cannot be deemed of such a character as to justify open resistance, by persons still claiming to be recognised as our members, against our established order ; especially when the peaceable, regular, and constitutional modes of obtaining explanation or redress, at the proper times, and through the proper organs of application, were repeatedly offered to the complainants." *

The meeting further decided, that the trustees had not violated any law of the Connexion in their application for leave to erect an organ ; that no pledge had been, or could

* "Minutes of the Special District Meeting," p. 7.

have been, given, that no organ should be erected in Brunswick chapel; and that the Conference had in no respect violated its rules, or acted from any unworthy motive, in acceding to the application of the trustees. It was also resolved that the leaders, although entitled to memorialize the District Meeting on any matter bearing on the spiritual interests of the classes placed under their care, or of the Society of which they form a part, had no right to assume that such memorial was entitled to more than kind, respectful, and patient consideration; much less that it interposed any legal veto, which would prevent the Conference from a free and full expression of its own judgment on the case.

The case of Matthew Johnson, who had been expelled by Mr. Grindrod, was considered; and it appeared that Mr. Johnson had acted in open defiance of Methodist rule, in calling factious meetings, after having been repeatedly warned of the impropriety of such conduct; and that, when charged with such misconduct in the Local Preachers' Meeting, of which he was a member, he not only admitted the fact, but boasted of it; and protested that he would do the same again, under similar circumstances. The District Meeting declared that Mr. Grindrod, in passing sentence of expulsion on Mr. Johnson in such circumstances, "had violated no law; but, on the contrary, acted in strict conformity with his pastoral rights and duties, as recognised by our long-established system and usages." The District Meeting also passed a long series of minutes; explaining Methodist rules, and vindicating the character and conduct of the ministers who had been so violently misrepresented and traduced. But it performed no act of discipline, and expelled neither officer nor member.

Decisions of
the meeting.
The presi-
dent's
address.

On the afternoon of the Sabbath which intervened between the sittings of this Special District Meeting, President Stephens delivered a very earnest, able, and affecting address, on the painful state of the Leeds Societies, and the Christian objects which the ministers composing the District Meeting had in view in coming to the town. He related an incident which we wish to preserve, in the hope that it may meet the eye of any Methodist who may be tempted to promote disaffection and disunion amongst religious brethren. Speaking of those whose unhappy activity had wrought so much evil in Leeds, he said, "Would to God I could have introduced these persons to the death-bed of an old friend of mine, who got to heaven as by the skin of his teeth! He had been an active agent in a division in a certain town; and, soon after the separation, he found he could not have everything his own way, because they all wanted to be masters. His head was sick, and his heart was faint; and he begged permission to return to the old Connexion. He was received; but he never lifted up his head again among his brethren with confidence. God had forgiven him, but he could never forgive himself. 'O, Sir,' said he, 'I was instrumental in taking away two or three hundred souls, and I could not keep them together; they were therefore turned adrift, and many of them got into the world: and when I think on these souls, my heart is almost fit to break, and I shall never forgive myself.' This man came to his death-bed, and it fell to my lot, as it accorded with my inclinations, to visit him. The blood of souls was still in his skirts, and he sank deeper and deeper into despair. I shall never forget the last time I visited him. He was apparently just entering another world, under a cloud of dark despair. His family were all standing by his bed. Tears ran down their

cheeks, and they were deeply affected at the thought of his dying in such a state of mind. I talked with him, and prayed with him; but the heavens were as brass, and the earth as iron; and it seemed as if God had shut up his bowels of tender mercy against him. He continued so till near midnight, when one glimmering ray of light darted into his mind; and his family clapped their hands, and shouted, 'Glory to God!' The little ray brightened into a flood of light, and the next day he died happy in God. Thus he was saved."* Alas! how many such, and even worse, cases,—which have never been followed by penitence and pardon,—might be found among the seceders from Methodism!

The extent of the religious loss produced by this fatal agitation, will never be told in this world. The seceders boasted of having taken from the Leeds Societies twenty-eight local preachers, seven exhorters, fifty-six leaders, and nine hundred members. How far this is correct we cannot say, but the estimate is not at all improbable. The numbers returned from the Leeds Circuit at the Conference of 1826 were five thousand one hundred and sixty-three members. In 1827, both the Circuits contained five thousand two hundred. After the secession, the numbers returned in 1828 were four thousand one hundred and sixty, being a net decrease of one thousand and forty. The seceders did not amount to this number. In such cases, during the storm of dissension and conflict, there are few additions to the Society from the world; the number of deaths and removals is, therefore, not met by an equivalent number of new members; so that the loss shown by the numerical returns always greatly exceeds the number of the separatists. But, making every allowance

* "The Address of the Rev. John Stephens," p. 12.

for this fact, the carnage of souls was terrible, and was not confined to Leeds. Sheffield, London, and other places, flooded by inflammatory circulars and pamphlets, sympathized with the supposed wrongs of the Leeds dissentients, and suffered no inconsiderable loss.

Remarkable
circum-
stances con-
nected with
this seces-
sion.

There are circumstances connected with this factious outbreak at Leeds, which, had they found no parallels in other agitations, would be truly wonderful: as it is, one or two deserve special mention. Is it not surprising that a difference of opinion on such a matter as the erection of an organ in a chapel should lead men holding a respectable position in society,—men of some education, and, as it must be believed, of some self-respect,—to use such language as we find in the printed documents of these dissentients? And what increases the wonder is, that this language is applied to ministers,—the very ministers who had preached to them the word of life. Yet these men are denounced as “tyrants,” “faithless,” “mercenary,” promoters of a “tyranny of the worst and most alarming character;” these are the men who must be “starved” into compliance with the wishes and views of persons who hold this language toward them. Gentlemen engaged in commerce differ in opinion, and oppose each other on points of great and vital interest, without forgetting the proprieties of good breeding. Even in political warfare, such foul personalities are deemed disgraceful to those who descend to their use. How is it, then, that professedly religious men, who essay to check evil in the Church of Christ, can submit to brand themselves with the disgrace of employing terms like these?

It is further remarkable that, even in this contest, Mr. Bunting was spoken of as the embodiment of the Conference. Yes; when he had been a member of the legal

Conference but about ten years, and while Benson, Moore, Clarke, Stephens, Entwisle, and a number of other noble-minded and sound-hearted Methodist ministers were alive, and full of intellect and vigour, Jabez Bunting was spoken of by the disaffected people of Leeds as the master and ruler of the Conference, which they declared he had quite enslaved. What a testimony to the superior capacity and mental energy of this eminent minister! Was there ever a higher compliment awarded to him?

Some of those who opposed the erection of the organ at Leeds, professed to do so from a conscientious objection to the use of instrumental music in Christian worship. And this profession procured the party the support of some of the preachers. Daniel Isaac not only sympathized with them, but interposed into the controversy a pamphlet, in which he maintained, that it was unlawful to introduce any instruments of music into places appropriated to Christian worship. He mainly grounded this opinion on the assumed fact, that "under the old dispensation" instrumental music "was restricted to the priestly office;" and he flatters himself that, when the preachers have read his tract, and "see the subject in its true light, they will make some efforts to restore the purity of divine worship." * This pamphlet received an able answer in a series of six letters by a local preacher. But this writer rendered his task more laborious than was necessary by not being aware of the true character of the worship in David's tabernacle on Mount Zion, and of the bearing of that worship on the Christian system. Like most writers, both Mr. Isaac and the "local preacher" regarded the Hebrew service of song as confined to the temple. The former, indeed, expressly says, that the Psalms composed

Controversy on the lawfulness of instruments of music in Christian worship.

* Preface to an "Essay on Singing."

by David and inscribed to Asaph and others, were so appointed that they might "perform those sacred odes over the sacrifices." * Very moderate research would have convinced both these able men that Asaph's appointment was not at the place where sacrifices were offered. This was at Gibeon, where the tabernacle which Moses built in the wilderness stood during the reign of David. But Asaph ministered to the Lord in the tabernacle of David on Mount Zion. There was the ark of the covenant, and there David and his pious fellow-worshippers held sweet communion, and poured out their sacred songs to the Lord. Here no priests ministered, save two, who sounded trumpets to call the people to the solemn assembly.

It was for this spiritual and unceremonial worship, that David composed his soul-inspiring hymns. It was here that Asaph and his companions of men-singers and women-singers (1 Chron. xxv. 5, 6) praised God. Here the instrumental music, spoken of so largely by the sweet Psalmist of Israel, accompanied this vocal harmony. Christians will never have worthy and complete views of Old-Testament religion, until all this is recognised. Nor is this precedent without application to Gospel times. The remarkable prophecy of Amos declared this worship to be the precursor, if not the pattern, of the Christian; (Amos ix. 11, 12;) and the apostolic authority accepted and ratified this declaration.† An enlightened conscience, therefore, willing to accept the teaching and guidance of Holy Scripture, could make no invincible objection to the introduction of one instrument into a place of Christian worship, on the ground of scriptural law or precedent. Others among the seceders gave intensity to their objec-

* "Essay on Singing," Works, vol. ii., p. 301.

† See SMITH'S "Harmony of the Divine Dispensations," p. 141.

tions, by insisting, that the organ was intended to be a precursor of the Liturgy; and that, if the instrument were admitted, the Church service would most certainly follow.

These assertions strengthened the prejudice against the Conference, and increased the numbers of those who turned their backs on their former pastors and associates, to find, as they supposed, a richer pasture elsewhere. A separate denomination of "Protestant Methodists" was formed. Chapels were built, congregations gathered, and at last a system of Church polity propounded. These proceedings threw a strong light on the real character and object of the seceders. Had it been true that these men were, as they vehemently protested, sound Methodists at heart, and were only grieved and outraged because the preachers, in their individual and collective capacity, had evinced overbearing and tyrannical dispositions, which led them to go beyond the letter and spirit of Methodist rule, in order to coerce the people; then we should expect to find, in the ecclesiastical code of the seceders, a fair and full reproduction of Methodism in its purity, freed from everything proved to be liable to error and misconstruction, and guarded from the abuses into which the parent Body might, on this theory, be supposed to have fallen. If the real cause of the disaffection was, as alleged, the erection of the organ, —partly on account of its being unsuitable for Christian worship, and also because it was likely to lead to an event considered so undesirable as the introduction of the Liturgy into Methodism chapels,—then it might be reasonably supposed that the new system of polity, framed under such influence, would place effective guards against evils so unsparingly denounced, and so greatly dreaded.

Character of
the seceders
shown in
their conduct
as Protestant
Methodists.

So, indeed, in his charity, thought the respected Daniel Isaac; but, as he afterwards candidly admitted, "his charity was soon obliged to give up the ghost." He found that, when the leaders of this party had effected their purpose by guiding hundreds of dupes into schism, they forgot all their professions and grounds of complaint. In a short time, they actually used an organ in one of the chapels in which they preached, near Leeds; and introduced the national Liturgy into their chapel in London. We need not wonder at the indignant terms in which the sternly "honest Daniel" denounced such conduct. "They affected," said he, "to be mightily in love with the laws of Methodism, and wanted nothing more of the Conference than a strict observance of them; and, in framing their own code, they professed to take Mr. Wesley as a guide. It was naturally expected, from such declarations, that the power would remain with the travelling preachers, only guarded against abuse by some efficient checks. Instead of this, however, they have stripped their itinerants of power, both legislative and executive, and modestly assumed to themselves much greater prerogatives than the Conference preachers ever claimed; not allowing the people any means of redress in cases of mal-administration. The secret is now out, and the mystery explained. No one can doubt that what they *have done* to their own ministers, they *wished to do* to ours. Their aim was to govern the preachers, and trample them under foot; and now that they can be gratified in this matter in their own Connexion, their consciences no longer boggle at organs or liturgies; both missionaries and people are welcome to flutes and forms of prayer, if they will but patiently wear their fetters. The writer respects conscience, even in its wanderings, and

reverences it when under the direction of divine truth ; but he abominates from the depth of his soul the man who, under its guise, is aiming at his own aggrandizement." Thus wrote Daniel Isaac, with all the facts of the case open to his investigation. We think a fairer judgment cannot be given : and we have no wish to add to the strength of his language.

The real object and character of the seceders was made apparent so early as April, 1828. They distributed a circular bearing date the third of that month, in which they virtually propounded an entire revolution of the Methodist system. It was gravely proposed to place the whole worship of God ("any thing that concerns the worship of God," is the expression) under the direction of, "1. Preachers, including the local preachers; 2. Trustees; and, 3. Leaders; and their determination to be final, without appeal to any other body." It was next proposed, "That no new laws, made by the Conference, should be enforced in any Circuit, unless sanctioned by the parties above mentioned." Then it was added, "It is the opinion of some of the most intelligent persons in the Connexion, that the Methodist system of church government is alike contrary to reason, to the British constitution, and to the usages of the New Testament. And it now deserves the serious consideration of Methodists in general, how far, as Christians, they can conscientiously support a system which is not sanctioned by the New Testament; and whether they ought not immediately to unite and send petitions to Conference, earnestly requesting that the Methodist law and discipline may be revised, and ultimately placed on a liberal and scriptural basis."

The excitements and anxieties arising out of this great disturbance filled up the Methodist history of the year.

Conference
of 1828.
Jabez Bunt-
ing presi-
dent second
time. Trans-
actions.

And, as considerable differences of opinion were understood to obtain among the preachers, respecting the course which had been taken in regard to the several phases of the Leeds disturbances, the approaching Conference of 1828 was anticipated with great concern. This assembly was held in London. Happily we have before us copious notes of its conversations. The election of president was the first question that called forth the judgment of the preachers. Jabez Bunting, as the late secretary, and the chosen official adviser of the president in all the late troubles at Leeds, was well known to have concurred in the proceedings adopted in reference thereto; if, indeed, he was not the ruling spirit by which that course of action was devised and directed. He was elected president by a considerable majority; and, considering the circumstances of the times, and that this was the first Conference at which his second election could take place, the appointment was a very strong proof of the general approval of his conduct by his brethren, and of their confidence in the purity of his motives and the wisdom of his counsels.

Discussion
on the Leeds
case. Deci-
sion of the
Conference.

As the Leeds case was the principal feature in the history of the year, so it was, in an equal degree, the business of the Conference. It was alluded to at a period when, in other circumstances, such an allusion would have been thought quite out of place. On the Rev. Robert Newton moving a vote of thanks to the ex-president, it was suggested by a preacher who had passed the chair, whether, as some important conversations were to come on, it would not be advisable to defer the vote. Another ex-president inquired, what was the extent of the vote of thanks; did it refer to all the official acts of the president? After a long conversation, the vote of thanks was put and carried, with a reservation as to the conduct

of the president in the case that was coming under special inquiry. A vote of thanks was then proposed to the ex-secretary, Mr. Bunting, in the same manner; but he at once declared, that he would receive no thanks with any reservation, unless a charge against him was submitted in writing.

The routine business of the session was then proceeded with. The Rev. William Capers, the American representative, was introduced, and welcomed with much cordiality and affection. The Leeds case occasioned debates of great length and difficulty. Many very nice points arose on the reception of memorials and other matters bearing on the subject. In all these, the president displayed remarkable tact, temper, and wisdom. In one speech, which occupied two hours, he discussed all the weighty questions at issue; and, in the course of the debate, emphatically pronounced the disturbances at Leeds to have been simply "an insurrection against the pastoral office." The issue of this discussion was most satisfactory. Mr. Stephens and Mr. Bunting received *unreserved* votes of thanks from the Conference; and a series of resolutions were passed, approving, confirming, and extending the course of action which had been adopted in the Leeds case; vindicating the president and ex-president from the insults which they had received; and cordially thanking the official persons in Leeds who had faithfully and affectionately supported the ministers in those times of perplexity and trial. The preachers on the Leeds Circuits also received the thanks of the Conference.

Many persons in the London South Circuit had sympathized with the Leeds dissentients; and, in the Quarterly Meeting of that Circuit, an Address to the Conference was voted in their favour. The Circuit stewards and others

Sympathy
of persons
in London
South Cir-
cuit with
dissentients
at Leeds.

earnestly opposed this unconstitutional proceeding ; but were out-voted on a division. The address was, in due course, presented to the Conference. But the promoters of this measure, in their zeal to serve the cause they had espoused, were guilty of an impropriety that quite neutralized any effect which their application to the Conference might otherwise have had. They printed their address, circulated it among the preachers, and even exposed it for sale in booksellers' shops, before the time for holding the Conference arrived. The Conference, therefore, having referred to these facts, resolved, "That these circumstances evince the real object of the chief promoters to have been not the redress of alleged grievances, but the excitement of dissatisfaction and suspicion among our Societies, by spreading charges of a calumnious nature, founded on false reasonings, respecting a case, with the real facts of which they were, for the most part, unacquainted ; and that all this was done without waiting for the explanation and defence of the parties so grossly slandered by *ex parte* statements ; and that, for these reasons, the Conference must decline taking the said Address into further consideration."

Not satisfied with having gone thus far, the same parties drew up a series of Resolutions in furtherance of their object, bearing date September twenty-third, 1828 ; and many pious and well-meaning persons, ignorant of their real import and design, were induced to affix their signatures. The principal object of the Address and Resolutions was to advocate the supreme authority of the local courts in Methodist Circuits ; so that what was decided in a Local Preachers' or Quarterly Meeting would be binding and final, and not subject to the revision of the Conference or any other authority : and thus a purpose privately avowed at the outset of the controversy would have been secured.

This proposal, if adopted, would, as already observed, constitute each Circuit an independent Church, thereby rendering the continuance of itinerancy impossible; for if each Circuit had the power of altering its doctrines, usages, and laws at pleasure, how could ministers itinerate? No man would know what he would be expected to preach, or what code of law he would be required to administer, in a new Circuit. To these Resolutions a masterly reply was furnished in "An Affectionate Address," from the pen of the Rev. Richard Watson. The case of the Resolutionists was literally demolished, the reply evincing equal power of argument and sweetness of temper.

The tendency distinctly observable in the government, and more fully evidenced by the friends and relatives of his majesty's ministers, to concede to the Papists the "claims" they had never ceased to urge, to an equality of political privileges and powers with Protestants, gave great alarm to many pious and judicious men of different denominations, and to none more than to some of the leaders of Methodism. Dr. Clarke largely shared in this feeling, and says in a letter to another preacher of eminence:—
 "My opinion of our present ministry is, that they are betraying the *King*, the *country*, and the *Church*, by delivering them into the hands of the *Papists*. How is it that our *president* and our *heads of houses* do not call on all our people to petition both Houses, and to carry, if necessary, our remonstrances against these Papists even to the foot of the throne? Shall we be *guiltless* before God, if we sit still? Alas for us! *Ei Cabod!* *Ei Cabod!*"

Apprehensions respecting Catholic claims. Committee of privileges.

Such convictions and apprehensions led to a meeting of the standing committee for guarding the privileges of the

Connexion, and to an earnest and interesting debate on the subject. On a full review of the circumstances in connexion with the position and duties of Methodism, the course suggested by Dr. Clarke was not thought expedient. The following resolution was adopted :—" That with respect to the Bill for the Relief of His Majesty's Roman Catholic Subjects, now before the House of Commons, the committee of privileges do not think it their duty to take any proceedings in their collective capacity ; but every member of the Methodist Society will, of course, pursue such steps in his individual capacity on this occasion as he may think right." The Connexion was thus preserved, by the wisdom which directed its operations, from being embroiled in a fruitless opposition to a measure which soon afterward became the law of the land ; and respecting which very conflicting opinions obtained amongst members of the Societies, as well as other inhabitants of the country.

Missionary
Report.
Colonial
slavery.

The missions still prospered. The Report for 1828, written by Dr. Townley, gave a cheering account of the progress of the Gospel under the most unfavourable circumstances. The number of stations amounted to one hundred and thirty-eight. The missionaries employed, exclusive of catechists and schoolmasters, numbered one hundred and ninety ; the members were thirty-six thousand nine hundred and seventeen, being an increase of more than two thousand on the year. The most affecting part of this statement is the fact, that of this number more than twenty-two thousand were slaves, and upwards of six thousand free Negroes and persons of colour in the West Indies, —a clear proof of the power of the Gospel to meet the case of the most abject and down-trodden of the population of

the globe. The income amounted to fifty thousand pounds,—exceeding the sum raised the preceding year by above six thousand pounds, and reaching the amount named a few years before as very desirable, but scarcely to be hoped for.

Five years had now elapsed since, by the efforts of many distinguished and philanthropic men, and more recently through the agency of the Anti-Slavery Society, a systematic and continuous aggression had been made on the colonial slave system of the British Empire. Yet the advocates for the abolition of this enormous injustice were obliged to confess the cause hopeless, so long as the planters were virtually indemnified for the loss of slave life by the maintenance of high protective duties in favour of slave-grown produce, and so long as slave proprietors were allowed to legislate for their bondmen. The government were believed to be not indifferent to the magnitude of the evil; but such formidable difficulties opposed their action, as to require very great wisdom to discover the means by which this opposition was to be overcome. A firm, vigorous, and general application to Parliament appeared the most likely to succeed; and for this the public mind was to be prepared by the wide diffusion of information,—the continued ventilation of the wrongs of multitudes of slaves.

The Conference for 1829 was held at Sheffield, when Dr. James Townley was elected president, and Robert Newton re-elected secretary. Dr. Townley was a native of Manchester, and received a liberal education from the eminent David Simpson, of Macclesfield. His parents were pious, and when yet young he became a member of the Methodist Society, and was truly converted to God. He entered the

The Conference of 1829.
Dr. Townley
president.
Transactions.

ministry in 1796, was appointed one of the general secretaries of the Missions in 1827, and continued to hold that office until he became a supernumerary in 1833. By diligent study he had obtained a respectable acquaintance with several languages, was well read in biblical literature and ecclesiastical history, and had produced some very excellent works. His brethren, by placing him at their head, did honour to a very useful and distinguished minister.

Efforts for
providing
education
for candi-
dates for
the ministry.

A decided step was taken by this Conference toward making some provision for the education of the candidates for the ministry. The subject had long engaged attention, and it may be desirable briefly to review its previous treatment. In the first Conference, 1744, when the primitive elements of a system for the employment of preachers in co-operation with Wesley were discussed, this question was mooted. "Can we have a seminary for labourers? Answer. If God spare us till another Conference." At the next Conference the subject was resumed. "Can we have a seminary for labourers yet? Answer. Not till God gives us a proper tutor." *

The rapid spread of the work, and the peculiar position which the Founder of Methodism occupied, prevented any further attempt to secure this object during Wesley's lifetime. Openings were presented for the ministration of the word more rapidly than men came to his hand; so that he was frequently in great need of preachers. He had, however, this advantage, that he could at any time take a man who, in his judgment, seemed suitable for the work, and send him into a Circuit. But this was a power which neither preachers nor people were willing to confide to any other man. As soon as Wesley was removed, it

* WATSON'S "Works," vol. v., p. 186.

became necessary to retain at the Conference a small number of the men who had been examined and approved as candidates, to supply the places of preachers who might become sick or die during the year. The names of men so retained were placed on the "List of Reserve." Such candidates might properly receive any educational aids the Connexion could supply. They would not, on this account, be made preachers by education and training, because they had been examined and received previously; so that any arrangement or provision for their after instruction would affect Methodism only to the extent of affording it a better-educated ministry.

No further steps were taken until 1823, when a committee of preachers met in the month of July, by appointment of the Conference, and prepared a Report, which was presented and approved in the following year. The matter was again in abeyance until this Conference of 1829; when the question was asked, "What further measures can we adopt for the improvement of our young preachers?" It was replied, "We are unanimously of opinion, that the time is fully come when some more systematic and effectual plan ought to be attempted for affording to those preachers who have been placed, after the usual examinations and recommendations, on the 'List of Reserve,' but are not immediately needed for the regular supply of the Circuits, such means of instruction in the doctrines and discipline of Methodism, and general improvement, as may prepare them for future usefulness." *

The factious conduct manifested at Leeds, and which had produced considerable dissatisfaction in several other Circuits, induced the Conference to place on record a

Declaration
of the Con-
ference on
its Disci-
pline.

* "Minutes," 1829, p. 514; and Appendix F.

minute on the Discipline of the Connexion ; declaring their purpose "to maintain and uphold" the existing Rules, which are said, "taken together," to secure alike the privileges of our people and the due exercise of the pastoral duties of ministers. Without reflecting on the excellent men who then administered the affairs of the Connexion, we regret that more than this was not done. It is, at least, unfortunate that the Discipline of the Connexion has scarcely ever been amended, except after serious loss. We are sure it is most unjust to attribute this circumstance to any illiberal disposition on the part of the Conference. The ordinary working of such a vast machine is sure to create, year by year, sufficient cause for labour and anxiety in its administration. Nevertheless, looking back on those times, with the experience gathered from subsequent conflict and suffering, it is easy to perceive that wise concessions to the lay influence of the Body might have been made even then. The position of the Wesleyan ministry in 1829 was vastly different from what it was in 1797. These thirty-two years had done much toward the creation of a clergy for Methodism ; and if the measures afterward adopted had been introduced at this time, their effect would have been more salutary, and probably much evil might have been prevented.

Furious per-
secution in
West Indies.

The West India Missions still prospered ; there being on the year an increase of nearly one thousand slaves to the Societies in the several islands. And this increase was obtained, notwithstanding very violent and continued persecution in various places. In the riot at St. Ann's, Jamaica, the Wesleyan chapel had been destroyed by a mob, and the missionary and his family exposed to great danger. Joseph Grimsdall, a young man of great promise and devoted piety, fell a victim to the persecuting spirit of

the magistracy of the same district. "For preaching the Gospel, he was shut up in the fetid dungeon which forms the gaol; an illness followed, which soon closed both his earthly troubles and his labour of love."* The official account of his death states, that "his sickness was marked by the most complete resignation; and in his last moments his joy was unspeakable."†

Instead of diminishing, this violence appeared to increase. On Sunday, the tenth of August, as the Rev. Isaac Whitehouse was on his way to St. Ann's Bay to preach, he was arrested by the head constable, carried before a magistrate, and committed to the county gaol. Notwithstanding his earnest entreaties to the contrary, he was placed in the same cell which had been occupied by Mr. Grimsdall; and found in it an insane Negress, who was then removed. "The cell was exceedingly filthy, and the stench unbearable." No bed was provided, not even straw; and with difficulty he obtained a few benches from the chapel, on which to make up a bed. Every expedient was tried to make the air of the place more wholesome, but in vain. A quantity of vinegar and camphorated rum was thrown over the floor and walls, but it produced little effect. The scanty supply of air came through a window just over the place where all the filth of the gaol was deposited. The surrounding cells were filled with unhappy wretches; some under sentence of death, and others ill. What with their groans and the clanking of their chains, in addition to other causes of disquiet, the missionary could scarcely get any sleep. Two days after the arrest of Mr. Whitehouse, the Rev. Joseph Orton, hearing what had happened, came from Montego Bay to console his brother, and

* "Anti-Slavery Reporter," vol. ii., p. 370.

† Octavo "Minutes," vol. vi., p. 343.

officiate in his place; but he also was arrested "for preaching and teaching as an unlicensed person," although he exhibited his credentials as an ordained minister, and a certificate of having subscribed the oaths. He was committed to the common gaol. These ministers lay in this wretched dungeon nearly a fortnight; when Mr. Orton became so very ill, that the deputy marshal, on his own responsibility, and against the opinion of the magistrates, allowed them to remove, on their parole, to the house of a friend. But for the humane daring of this officer, it is most probable that, like Mr. Grimsdall, they would both have fallen victims to this intolerable cruelty.

Whilst the incarcerated ministers were thus suffering, the other missionaries were preparing the necessary affidavits on which to obtain a writ of *habeas corpus*. This was issued on the twenty-ninth, when the discharge of the missionaries was formally moved for. His honour the chief justice did not hesitate a moment, but ordered their full and unconditional discharge; proving that the conduct of the persecuting magistrates was as illegal as it was cruel. These persecutions, together with the continued and increasing severity with which great numbers of the wretched Negro slaves were treated, and other general considerations, induced the Conference of 1829 to take up the subject of the abolition of Negro slavery with great earnestness. They resolved, "That it shall be earnestly recommended to the members of our Societies throughout the kingdom, to unite with their fellow Christians of different denominations, in any petitions which may be sent to Parliament, having for their object the carrying into effect those measures to which the legislature already stands pledged for the mitigation and ultimate abolition of the state of Negro slavery."

Although in his sixty-seventh year, the venerable and indefatigable Gideon Ouseley still prosecuted his missionary labours among his benighted countrymen in Ireland, with unabated vigour and success. During the year ending June, 1830, he travelled as extensively, and preached as frequently, as at any former period of his life. His visits, during which he preached not less than one thousand sermons, extended to every one of the four provinces. As on wings of faith and love he flew from place to place, he was always anxious to preach the truth, and ever ready to refute error. Falsehood, in all its various and insidious forms, he attacked with heroic daring, and the skill of an experienced polemic. Some time before this, a friar, Brennan, affected to conform to the Established Church; but, when Ouseley reached Dundalk in the winter, this friar had just published a penitential address to the Roman Catholics; very elaborate, and highly calculated to lull unsuspecting Protestants, and to ensnare the ignorant. He defended seven of his doctrines, with many tears and appeals to God for his sincerity. Well aware of the character of all this policy, so common on such occasions, Ouseley prepared and published a very able and conclusive reply; in which he proved the friar's seven doctrines to be in direct opposition to the Gospel, and therefore seven falsehoods; and insisted that the pretended penitent friar believed neither his doctrines nor his arguments in support of them. In conclusion, he urged the friar or his priests to reply, if they were able; but no answer appeared.

Remarkable
zeal and
labours of
the Rev.
Gideon
Ouseley.

Ouseley, indeed, had to use "the armour of righteousness on the right hand and on the left." About the same time, a clergyman of the Established Church, in the county of Fermanagh, violently assailed the doctrine and discipline of the Methodists, as the worst of heresies. The people

were much affected by this attack; and felt anxious that Ouseley should reply to the parson. He did so; and this was one of his most happy controversial efforts. Perhaps it derived its superior excellence from Ouseley's opinion of his opponent. In many other controversies, he was convinced that he had to oppose wickedness, duplicity, and fraud, as well as false doctrine. In this case, much as he disapproved the sentiments he had to oppose, he believed that his opponent was a conscientious, Christian man. Whilst, therefore, he refuted with great acuteness the allegations put forth, traced their plausible error through its various sinuosities to its source, and displayed in the argument an equal acquaintance with the Bible, and with the best productions of the learned divines of the English Church, he treated his adversary with Christian candour and great courtesy; but at the same time he fully maintained what he believed to be the great truths of the Gospel with irresistible cogency and force.

In England, as well as in Ireland, the work of evangelizing the dark and benighted minds of sinful and depraved men was prosecuted with vigour and success. Here and there appeared, in the pulpits of different denominations, "a burning and a shining light," glowing with intellect, and warm with love, whose consecrated labours marked a glorious pathway of Gospel triumph. But in Methodism, as in other evangelical churches, the more marked success in the conversion of sinners was generally gained by men of ordinary intellect, but of more than ordinary Christian zeal. Of these—whatever be the verdict of a carnal world, or a cold, spiritless philosophy, respecting their abundant toil—Methodism will never be ashamed. The Rev. John Smith, one of the most illustrious of this class of ministers, was now prosecuting his labours in the

Lincoln Circuit, to which he had been appointed at the Conference of 1829. The following extract from his private Journal, uttering as it does the outspoken language of his heart, contains a graphic description of his toils and success :—

Rev. John
Smith's
piety, zeal,
and great
usefulness.

“October 29th, 1829.—I am rather strong to labour. I am disposed to labour. I have plenty to do; and the best of all is, God is with me! I had been told that the Lincoln congregation consisted of very still sort of people, who were incapable of excitement, &c., &c. Caution, caution, would be necessary. Well, pondering took place in my mind. The result was, ‘I will strike the first Sunday.’ I did so; execution was done. God saved four: and He has saved, I should think, at least four-score since in Lincoln. Hallelujah! Hail to the Lord’s Anointed! The royal diadem belongs to Him! We will crown Him Lord of all! The floods are coming! Many drops, some showers, have already descended: how refreshing! But the floods are coming! If our people continue in agonizing, believing prayer, which has fast hold of them at present,—and why not?—nothing can stand before them. Satan will fall like lightning from heaven. Hardness, levity, carelessness, and profanity, are as chaff before the wind. God has risen from His holy habitation, and speaks salvation in every direction. What an honour to be one of His attendants,—to be one of His heralds! I cry out, ‘He is *coming*,’ and often, ‘He is *here*!’ His royal presence is known by His bounty distributed,—pardons in great numbers,—the frequent healing of backsliders,—clean hearts: filled spirits go away rejoicing, and the arrows stick fast in the hearts of the King’s enemies. With tears, and cries, and groans, and rejoicings, I say,—

‘Live for ever, wondrous King,
Born to redeem, and strong to save.’

I should like to enter into particulars, but, for want of room, I cannot go back far. Only, some who were thought to be most unlikely to get salvation have been saved; such as proud, high-spirited young men, &c. But what is all this before the Omnipotent Spirit, whose work it is to save? From four to twenty have been saved at one meeting in Lincoln, again and again. An uncommon stir there is in the Circuit, and persons from nine to seventy-six years of age are among the saved.”

Joseph
Taylor.

Just at the close of this Conference year, the Rev. Joseph Taylor, “the first of that name who adorns the annals of Methodism,” finished his forty-four years’ course of humble and godly ministerial service. Born at Duffield, near Derby, December, 1752, and converted in early life, he entered the ministry in 1777, and was appointed to Leicester. He was soon placed in some of the most important Circuits, and at the end of five years was made superintendent of West Cornwall, where he witnessed a gracious and extensive revival. Amid these scenes of holy excitement, he laboured so incessantly as seriously to injure his constitution. During his two years’ ministry in that Circuit there was a net increase in the Society of nearly six hundred members. In 1785 he went into Scotland, and soon afterward ranked among the foremost of the preachers of his day. His uprightness, piety, and general ability, so commended him to Wesley, that he ordained him for the ministry in North Britain, placed his name in the Deed of Declaration, and appointed him one of his trustees.

We have no record of his life beyond the usual obituary in the Minutes, and therefore cannot trace his course minutely. In 1802 he was elected president of the Con-

ference; * and in the following year we catch a glimpse of him in his London appointment. The anecdote is too beautiful to be omitted. "After finishing the renewal of the tickets," writes Dr. Bunting, September, 1803, "I walked home. Mr. Taylor came a little after me; and says, this has been the hardest day's work he has ever performed since he left Cornwall many years ago. We tried to rouse each other by singing to Beaumont's tune, to which he is as partial as myself,—

'O may Thy Spirit seal,' &c.,

but had not strength enough left to finish it. So we gave it up, and began to talk of Macclesfield."† What a lovely scene is this! An aged minister, who has just filled the highest office in the Connexion, and a young evangelist, with his ordination vows fresh upon him, going home, after a hard Sabbath's toil, fairly knocked up with work, and then endeavouring "to rouse each other by singing,"—

"O may Thy Spirit seal
Our souls unto that day;
With all Thy fulness fill,
And then transport away!
Away to our eternal rest;
Away to our Redeemer's breast!"

By over-exertion in early years, especially during the great revival in Cornwall, he injured his constitution and entailed upon himself infirmities, which gave to his efforts in the pulpit an air of physical feebleness. His discourses were not brilliant; but full of richly-varied matter, well-arranged, and delivered "in a gentle, graceful, and persuasive manner." He was zealous in "redeeming the time;" unimpeachable in his integrity; and conscientiously

* See vol. ii., pp. 360, 361, and *note*.

† "Life of Jabez Bunting, D.D.," vol. i., p. 170.

frugal in his personal expenditure, that "he might have to give to him that needeth," and more liberally support various religious institutions. During the last nine years of his life he was a supernumerary at Derby, where he was greatly beloved and honoured, preaching till within a short time of his departure "to the comfort of his own mind, and the edification of his congregations." Some of his last sayings were, "In the beginning of my illness, I found such a desire to take my place again in the pulpit as I cannot describe; but, I now leave that." "I am under great and eternal obligations to the Head of the Church; so that I wish to do all I can to promote His glory." "God is with me; He never leaves me." "I can talk of nothing but the love of Christ." "There is nothing on which I can depend, but the atonement." He died in June, 1830; and nine years after his departure there is this refreshing entry in the Report of the Centenary movement,—“In memory of the late Rev. Joseph Taylor, under whose ministry Mr. Turner was convinced of sin, Five Guineas.” *

The Confer-
ence at
Leeds, 1830.

The Rev. George Morley was appointed president at the Conference held in Leeds, July twenty-eighth, 1830. The

* We venture to transcribe the following anecdote of this amiable and worthy old man:—"Miss Meredith and Miss Rutherford are musically inclined, and entertained Mr. Taylor by playing and singing. He desired them to sing a favourite Scotch air in the words of one of our hymns. They wished to retain the words of a love song, to which the music originally belonged; and asked him whether he saw any harm in those words. His answer, I think, deserves recording; as the maxim it contains will apply to a thousand similar instances:—"My children, you do well to inquire, in the first place, Is there any *harm* in it? But, if this first question be answered in the negative, still there is a second inquiry to be made, which must be answered in the affirmative, before your use of that song can be justified: Is there any *good* in it?"—Life of Dr. Bunting, vol. i., p. 190.

increase in the Societies was only one thousand and sixty-three in Great Britain, fifty in Ireland, and one thousand five hundred and twenty-six in the foreign stations. While this addition of two thousand six hundred and thirty-nine members called forth gratitude to the Author of all good, it was acknowledged, in the Pastoral Address, to be much smaller than the wide-spread agency employed afforded reason to expect. Yet, say the assembled ministers, "We do not yield to despondency or fear; but we feel ourselves specially called upon to 'stir up the gift of God' in our own hearts, and in yours. 'Suffer,' then, 'the word of exhortation.' Unite with us in seeking a larger measure of 'grace, mercy, and peace;' and in striving to diffuse around you the true 'knowledge of Jesus Christ and Him crucified.'" Several important spiritual advices were added, with a view to promote individual piety, and a revival of the work of God.

Rev. George
Morley
president.

The virulent opposition of the West India interest to the evangelization of the slaves was not only continued, but increased, and the inhuman and cruel treatment of the wretched victims of this enormous iniquity was, year by year, rendered more intolerable. The Conference therefore inquired, "What measures could be recommended to promote the abolition of colonial slavery?" and, in reply, observed, "The Conference, taking into consideration the laudable efforts which are now making to impress the public with a due sense of the injustice and inhumanity of continuing that system of slavery which exists in many of the colonies of the British crown, and to invite a general application to Parliament, by petition, that such measures may in its wisdom be adopted, as shall speedily lead to the universal termination of the wrongs inflicted upon so large a portion of our fellow men," &c. A series of important practical

Renewed
efforts for
the abolition
of colonial
slavery.

resolutions was adopted, and placed on the Minutes. The obligations under which they, as ministers of Christ, were laid, to exert themselves for the removal of this evil, was distinctly asserted. The grossly irreligious and immoral character of the whole system, and the frightful wickedness and cruelty which it occasioned, were vividly expressed. And, lastly, those members of Society who possessed the elective franchise were exhorted to use that solemn trust in behalf of justice and humanity, and for the rescue of nearly a million of their fellow men from the vilest bondage, by giving their influence and votes only to such candidates for seats in Parliament as would pledge themselves to support the most effectual measures for the entire abolition of slavery throughout the British colonies.

The discussions at this Conference were particularly harmonious; and, judging from what took place, the preachers were never more fully united in judgment and affection. The devotional services were numerous, and exceedingly well attended. The first committee met on July twentieth, and the sittings of the Conference closed August ninth; the entire business meetings and religious services ranging over twenty-one days. During this period, two hundred and forty-three sermons, many of them delivered out of doors, were preached in the town and neighbourhood, by one hundred and seventy preachers. A divine unction generally accompanied the word, and rendered it the power of God unto salvation. Several persons professed to find the pearl of great price,—peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. The number of preachers who attended the Conference was four hundred.

In the Address to the Irish Conference, we find an allusion to the troubles of the preceding year, and the violent

efforts still made to disturb the peace of the Connexion. "Great as were the efforts made by some disaffected persons to interrupt our harmony, and sow the seeds of discord and anarchy, the revolution of another year has, we believe, given ample satisfaction to all discreet and pious persons among us, of the wisdom and necessity of those strong measures which the exigence of the case required, to preserve entire that salutary government of our Societies, under which, for such a series of years, they have enjoyed peace and prosperity." *

There was ample reason for the expression of this opinion. It might, indeed, have been stronger in its terms, and more extensive in its range. To speak of the means employed by the disaffected parties in Leeds and elsewhere simply as "great efforts," conveyed no adequate idea of their persevering aggression on the peace of the parent Connexion, or of the virulent language and manner in which it was conducted. Retaining the opinion previously expressed, that it would have been wise in the Conference to have carefully reviewed and modified their disciplinary laws in 1828, we can, nevertheless, find no reason for the continued and malignant opposition of the seceders. Leaving all minor points out of the question, it is certain that in 1798 the supreme legislative and administrative power in the Wesleyan Connexion remained in the Conference. Whatever interpretation be put on the Plan of Pacification, or on the Regulations of 1797, this fact is undoubted. Those, therefore, who regarded this as improper, could find a system holding the same doctrines, but framed on a democratic basis, in the New Connexion.

Continued aggression on the Leeds seceders on the peace of the Connexion.

In this condition of things the Leeds organ dispute arose, and the Conference, in the exercise of its undoubted

* Octavo "Minutes," vol. vi., p. 629.

power, decided in favour of the appeal of the trustees. Now we do not say that those who violently opposed the introduction of the instrument were bound to regard this decision as reasonable and right. But we do say that it required very strong evidence indeed, to warrant any man in declaring this exercise of legitimate authority as corrupt in its motive and object. Even if this evidence existed, and there appeared sufficient reason to conclude that so large a number of Christian ministers could so far forget their sacred responsibility to Christ, and their duty to the people of their charge, as to pervert judgment by a corrupt and improper decision, the sad conclusion would affect the men whose duty called them to prefer such an accusation, were they Christian men, more with sorrow than with anger. In such a fearful clerical delinquency, however they might protest against the injustice done, there would be more disposition to pray for those who had so grievously erred, than to revile them in unmeasured terms, and to perpetuate for years a systematic vituperation of them, and of the Church to which they belonged.

We have put the case hypothetically, in order to show, in the strongest possible point of view, the position of the seceders, and the conduct which, as really Christian men, they would be likely to evince. But we do not believe that any such impropriety of conduct has been proved against the preachers stationed at Leeds, the members of the Special District Meeting, or the Conference. It is not necessary to contend for the perfect propriety of every step taken in such a complicated and very difficult series of circumstances. Inadvertencies and errors may have been committed; unintentional wrong may even have been done: but a careful examination of the whole case leads us to the same judgment with the eminently pious and liberal

Entwisle, who had watched the administration of discipline with some disapprobation and much jealousy, but who, at length, "most cordially concurred in the decision to which the Conference came." *

How, then, is the conduct of the seceders, on the supposition of their piety, to be accounted for? They had retired from the old Connexion, rather than remain in it subject to the meaning which the Wesleyan authorities had given to their rules, and had formed a separate Connexion. In these circumstances, what occasion was there for continued animosity? Why could not both parties direct attention to their own internal affairs, and labour to extend religion, each in its own way? As far as we can learn, the Wesleyan community did this. Regretting the alienation of so many of their former friends, and the altered opinions they had adopted, they nevertheless addressed themselves to their proper work,—the conversion of sinners, and the edification of believers. We have carefully looked through the Minutes of the Conference, and the pages of the "Wesleyan-Methodist Magazine," from the decisions of 1828 to the Conference of 1830, and we can scarcely find a direct reference to the dispute and separation; and even when they are indirectly alluded to in the way of argument, no word of bitterness is employed, nor is any expression of reproach to be found.

But how did the seceders conduct themselves? Not only did they use intemperate and unjustifiable language in the heat of the struggle, but they continued it, with unabated bitterness, for years afterward. In the "Protestant Methodist Magazine," a monthly periodical established by the party, scarcely a month passed without the most violent abuse of the Conference, or some of the preachers; of the

* "Memoir," p. 353.

system, or some parts of its economy. It were easy to fill pages in proof of this rabid display of unchristian feeling and conduct, but we forbear. It would not be just, however, to omit the mention of this important fact; and, having done so, we dismiss the Leeds organ case, with the observation, that the ostensible cause of the quarrel, the application for leave to erect the organ, was evidently laid hold of by men who earnestly desired to subvert the existing economy of Methodism, as a pretext for their efforts towards the accomplishment of other objects; and having signally failed in their endeavours, they could not refrain from abusing the men and the system which they were unable to overthrow.

A Supplement added to the Wesleyan Hymn-Book.

For some time there had existed a wide-spread desire among the preachers and people for an enlargement of the Methodist Hymn-Book. It was well known that many very beautiful and spiritual hymns, from the pen of Charles Wesley and other hymnists, adapted to festival occasions, and exhibiting the heights and depths of religious experience, were in existence; and it was thought desirable that a selection from them should be rendered available for the public and social worship of the Connexion, by being appended to the Hymn-Book. There was another reason for this step, which, although not much noticed at the time, very properly had its influence in leading to the desired publication of additional hymns. The copyright in the old Hymn-Book having expired; it was reprinted by several booksellers for their own private emolument, and in a very incorrect form. This, of course, inflicted a pecuniary loss on the Book-Room, and placed in the hands of the people an adulterated book. Very few of these republications were exact copies of the original. Some

changed hymns, others introduced alterations, so that the effects were becoming serious.

All this inconvenience was removed by a Supplement to the old Hymn-Book, published about the close of 1830. This selection was made chiefly by Richard Watson, whose knowledge of that kind of sacred literature was very extensive, and his taste admirable. He had an exquisite perception of the beauties of good hymns, and was especially fond of the poetic productions of Charles Wesley. By collecting, therefore, some of the best from a great number of the published and unpublished hymns of this eminent poet, a few from Watts, and a small number from other authors, an addition of two hundred and nine compositions was made to the Hymn-Book. This Supplement has not only served the other purposes alluded to above, but has considerably varied and extended Wesleyan sacred song. It was well received by the Connexion and the public, and still rises in estimation after being used for thirty years.

In our preceding pages, reference has frequently been made to the effects produced on the Methodist Connexion by the violent political convulsions with which this country, or the continent of Europe, has been visited. Perhaps there never were mightier influences of this kind brought into operation within the range of modern history, than arose from events which commenced about this period. France was the point whence these convulsive throes originated. On the restoration of the Bourbons in that country at the peace of 1814, Louis XVIII. was seated on the throne. It must be admitted that he exercised great tact and skill in the difficult position in which he was placed. He gave to the nation a constitution more enlightened and liberal than might, under the circum-

Revolution
in France
and other
continental
nations.

stances, have been expected ; and, by always placing some liberal members in the ministry as colleagues with royalists, he managed, although not always without a violent stretch of prerogative, to carry on the government to the end of his life. He died in 1824, and was succeeded by his brother, Charles X. This sovereign was a bold, bigoted man, and a sincere Catholic. He would not, therefore, stoop to the measures by which his predecessor had weathered many storms, but adopted a more daring course. This conduct, however, magnified rather than removed his difficulties. In 1829 he determined to appoint a ministry composed entirely of Bourbon royalists, of which the Prince de Polignac was the head,—a measure which hastened the crisis. The people saw, in this action of the court, a determination to establish despotic rule ; and, with all the impulsiveness of Frenchmen, they took the most energetic measures to resist it. The chambers expressed their want of confidence in the ministry, and were dissolved. But instead of arrangements for a new election, after a short space royal ordinances appeared, abolishing the constitution, and annulling the charter on which it was based. The result of this violent infraction of public liberty was thus briefly narrated : “ On Monday the ordinances appeared in the ‘*Moniteur* ;’ on Tuesday the people murmured ; on Wednesday they took up arms, fought, and bled ; on Thursday they triumphed over armed oppression ; and on Friday the elder branch of the Bourbons had ceased to reign. Europe stood aghast at these marvellous occurrences,—at the infatuation of the king, and the matchless heroism of the people. In ten days they had hurled a tyrant from his throne, and elected in his stead a constitutional sovereign, bound by conditions fixed on by the national representatives. These sudden vicissitudes—this mighty convulsion

—shook every throne. Within a month after, Belgium became the scene of a popular revolution hardly less astonishing. The shock was felt throughout Germany, in Italy and Poland, and even in England.”

The course of events, no less than the temper of the public mind in this country, prepared it for receiving the influence arising from these continental disturbances. George IV. died, and William IV. succeeded him on the throne of Great Britain, June twenty-sixth, 1830,—just a month before the revolution in France. George was but moderately esteemed; William came to the throne with the *prestige* of an honest, open character, and liberal views. On his accession, the Wellington ministry was in office; but with a very slender hold on the sympathies of the nation. It had offended its most thorough friends by the Catholic Relief Bill; while its refusal to entertain the question of Parliamentary Reform prevented the Liberals giving it any extensive support. The general election which immediately ensued, provided a House of Commons decidedly adverse to the government. Henry Brougham was returned for Yorkshire, and Joseph Hume for Middlesex. The expulsion of the Wellington administration, and the inauguration of that of Earl Grey,—who was pledged to an extensive measure of Parliamentary Reform,—rapidly followed in the ordinary course of events.

Consequent
popular
excitement
intensely
felt in
England.

This pledge was redeemed. The first Reform Bill was introduced by Lord John Russell on the first of March, 1831; and, in consequence of the influence of public opinion, although the last election had taken place under the auspices of the Wellington government, the Bill was read the first time by a majority of *one*. Soon afterward, an amendment to one of the ministerial propositions was carried; and this was deemed of so much importance, that

Parliament was dissolved, as was stated in the speech from the throne, expressly for the purpose of taking the sense of the people as to the proposed alteration in the representation. The public excitement during the elections was intense; the country was in a frenzy. But time passed on, and the Parliament met on the fourteenth of June. A second Reform Bill was introduced, which passed the Commons by large majorities, but was rejected in the Lords on the eighth of October.

The Conference of 1831.
George Marsden
president.
Transactions.

Meanwhile the Methodist Conference of 1831 was held in Bristol, when the Rev. George Marsden was placed in the chair; it was his second appointment to that important and responsible office. The excitement of the public mind, through the political changes and disturbances of the times, was very unfavourable to personal religion. The increase in the Societies, throughout Great Britain and Ireland, did not reach one thousand members. The causes of this limited success were fully recognised in the annual Pastoral Address, which said, "The continued pressure of the times, and the bustle and dissipation of a general election, have been very unfriendly to the progress of the work of God." Extensive emigration also, especially from Ireland, greatly aggravated the effect of these influences. Alive to the danger of allowing political objects too large an ascendancy over the mind in Christian professors, the Address went on to exhort the members of Society: "We live in times of great political ferment and agitation. Take heed to yourselves, brethren, 'lest your hearts be overcharged with cares of this life.' Let not the world of politics engross too much of your time and attention. Avoid all undue eagerness and anxiety on subjects which, however their importance may be magnified by the men of

the world, are only of moment, in the estimation of the Christian, as far as they can be rendered subservient to the best interests of mankind. Should you acquire any additional civil rights, you will, we trust, consider them as talents intrusted to your care, to be employed in promoting the interests of humanity and religion."

The importance of providing means for the instruction of the young preachers on the "List of Reserve," was again brought under consideration; and the Rev. Messrs. Entwisle, Gaulter, Bunting, Edmondson, Watson, Reece, Thomas Jackson, Isaac, Valentine Ward, Lessey, Hannah, Stephens, Marsden, Burdsall, Morley, Galland, Warren, and Richard Waddy, were re-appointed a committee for this purpose.

Ever watchful over the oppressed Negroes suffering in colonial slavery, Mr. Watson had, previously to the last general election, prepared a spirited and eloquent Address. This he intended to publish on the eve of the elections, in his own name, and on his own responsibility, as an appeal to the Wesleyan Methodists, for the purpose of directing their attention to the importance of a righteous exercise of their elective franchise on that important occasion. He was, however, diverted from that purpose by the course which the Anti-Slavery Society resolved to pursue. At a general meeting of that institution, an "Address to the People of Great Britain and Ireland" was agreed on; calling on the electors, in returning Members to Parliament, to remember the enslaved Negroes, and to support such candidates only as would vote for emancipation. To this document, which was extensively circulated, and stitched up with the principal monthly periodicals, Watson's name was attached, in conjunction with those of Buxton, Gurney, Wilberforce, Smith, Macaulay,

The Rev.
Richard
Watson's
efforts on
behalf of
the Negro
slaves.

Wilson, Lushington, and Clarkson. This step, however, did not prevent Mr. Watson bringing the subject before the Conference; when he moved an important resolution, which was adopted, and published with the "Minutes." *

Dr. Clarke's
Irish schools.

In the preceding year, the venerable Dr. Adam Clarke's attention was directed to the destitute state of some of the more Protestant country parts of Ireland, in relation to the means of education. From the general persuasion, that Protestant districts, however poor and depressed, were better cultivated, both religiously and otherwise, than Roman Catholic districts, the former had been, for the most part, passed by in the labours of those who were endeavouring to extend the educational appliances of the country. In many of those places the uneducated and neglected progeny of wicked Protestants were nearly as destitute of moral and religious instruction, as the children of wicked Catholics. Dr. Clarke directed his attention to the remedy of this evil, and, aided by some personal friends, and the liberal benefactions of other benevolent individuals, he established six efficient schools in very destitute districts. In these, not only children, but young persons, received a knowledge of letters, and of the elements of religious truth. Having succeeded thus far, the indefatigable Doctor again visited his native country; passed through the scenes of his childhood and early religious life,—where these schools were raised,—inspecting them, and preaching the Gospel to large congregations in town and country. At first, some little misunderstanding arose as to the effect of these schools, and the measures for their support, upon the Methodist Mission schools; but this was soon dispelled by explanations, and the Doctor exulted in the accomplishment of his truly noble

* "Minutes," vol. vii., p. 66, *foot-note*.

and benevolent purpose. After Dr. Clarke's death, these schools were transferred to the Missionary Committee, and carried on under their auspices.

At the Conference of 1831, Dr. Clarke was set down as a supernumerary in the Sixth London Circuit. This was much against his will, and grieved him at his heart. It must be admitted that at his age it might be inferred, and, indeed, he freely allowed, that he was unequal to the full duties of an itinerant preacher. Yet his case was an extraordinary one, and, as such, had previously received, and still called for, more than ordinary indulgence. On the other hand, it was impossible for any man to live away from his Circuit, as Dr. Clarke had done for many years, devoting himself as he did to such extensive literary labours, without leaving much of the ordinary duty of a regular Methodist preacher undone, at least by himself in person; and, with every respect for his talents, virtues, and works, his brethren might have thought that they had already allowed him as large a licence as was compatible with their duties to the Connexion. The authorities at Hinde Street had virtually suggested the solution of the difficulty. Having petitioned the Conference for the appointment of the Doctor to their Circuit longer than the maximum period of three years, the only way, in regular course, in which their wishes could be met, was to do what was done by placing him there as a supernumerary.

Dr. Clarke a
supernume-
rary.

We cannot, however,—and especially as Dr. Clarke's life was only extended a short time longer,—but join in the regret which he and his family felt, that some way was not devised for meeting his wishes, and saving him from smarting under a sense of unkindness, if not of injury. But it must be said, to the high honour of this eminent man, that his spirit was too noble, and his soul too Christian, to inflict injury

on the Church of God on account of any real or supposed unkindness toward him by its ministers. He accepted every invitation to preach, as far as possible; threw himself into every open door; and, with his usual large-heartedness and zeal, assisted at various anniversaries of Methodist chapels and institutions, with great benefit to the cause, and blessing to the people. This fact might not be worthy of such special notice, if the very opposite conduct had not been often manifested by those who profess to be very great admirers of this eminent man. About a year after this happened, when our missions and missionaries in the West Indies were furiously assailed, and, indeed, threatened with destruction by an organized combination of the colonists, he was written to on the subject by one of the missionary secretaries. When this letter reached him, he was at Sheffield, whence he wrote to his wife: "I see that there is a flame kindled in our inheritance, and I feel that I am needed: the terms in which Mr. James speaks of my services, as he calls them, are affecting. I shall pocket and seal up all my causes of complaint; join myself even to the forlorn hope, at the front of the storming party, and mount the breach for the God of armies, in the defence of His people." This feeling and conduct were worthy of Adam Clarke.

Further political excitement on Parliamentary Reform.

The violent agitation in favour of Parliamentary Reform still convulsed the country. The Parliament was summoned for the dispatch of business on the sixth of December, soon after which a third Reform Bill was introduced, and triumphantly carried through the Commons; but, in the Upper House, the opposition to the measure was again renewed, and a motion, adverse to some of its clauses, was carried by a large majority. As it was understood that this was the first of a series of efforts to delay and mutilate the

measure, the ministry resigned. The announcement of this event electrified the country. The prospect of the return of the Tories to power, and the loss of the Reform Bill on which the public mind was set, roused all classes. A week of terrific agitation followed. The king sent for Lord Lyndhurst; but, it is understood, stipulated, that in the event of his party taking office, "an extensive Reform" should be effected. Under this limitation it was found impossible to construct a ministry; and Earl Grey and his colleagues returned to their former appointments with powers commensurate to their difficulties. As, however, all parties deprecated such an extensive creation of peers as would give a Reform majority in the House of Lords, a circular, intimating the royal pleasure, sufficed to diminish the attendance of the opposition members of the Upper House to such an extent, as allowed the Bill to pass, by a large majority, on the fourth of June, 1832. The Parliament was soon afterwards prorogued, and dissolved early in December, when a new House of Commons was elected under the new system of representation.

All this continued political excitement, strengthened and extended as it was by the events taking place on the Continent, tended very greatly to harass and disquiet the public mind. The democratic influence was exerted to the utmost. Indeed, judging from what occurred in some populous places, it may be safely concluded that the people were carried to the very verge of revolution. And, considering the mighty obstructions surmounted in carrying the Reform Bill, it must have largely tended to render the masses impatient of control, and, to a very great extent, confident of their power, as irresistible.

The influence of missionary labour, in evangelizing the slaves in the West Indies, and in training them to the prac-

tice of piety under the enlightening and elevating power of the Gospel, together with the vigorous exertions of the Anti-slavery Society, produced a state of things in those colonies which, it was evident to all candid observers, could not be maintained. The Negroes were too extensively enlightened and informed to be continued in a state of slavery. At the Conference of 1831, there were thirty-three thousand and twenty-one members of the Methodist Society in the West Indies, of whom twenty-four thousand four hundred and ninety-nine were slaves, and seven thousand two hundred and eighty-one free coloured and blacks. In Jamaica alone there were eight thousand eight hundred and forty-three slave members, and three thousand one hundred and fourteen free coloured and blacks in Society. Such a number of pious persons could not be perpetually kept in a bondage so debased, that men and women were stript naked, and flogged more brutally than beasts of burden in any civilized country. So fully were the planters aware of this impossibility, that their antipathy to all missionary agencies knew no bounds. Many a wretched slave had been tortured to death, because he would not abandon the house of God and the means of grace. So extensively did this conviction operate, that, in numerous instances, the planters told the slaves that they knew the government at home meant to set them free, but that they, the planters, would kill them first.

Insurrec-
tion and
Colonial
Church
Union in
Jamaica.

In this state of things some daring Negroes in Jamaica persuaded themselves that, if they could only master the planters, they would be aided rather than punished by the king's government. And thus the germs of a terrible insurrection were developed. The crisis was hastened, however, by an act which, although brutal, was by no means unusual. An attorney of one of the estates, on his way to

the property under his care, met a female slave with a piece of sugar-cane in her hand, which he concluded had been stolen from an adjacent cane-field. He punished her himself on the spot, and took her back to the estate to be more severely flogged by the driver. The driver, however, proved to be the woman's husband; and, on being ordered to lay down his wife, and strip and flog her, he at first hesitated, and then positively refused. Another driver was sought; but he also was some relation, and refused. The attorney had to leave the estate without having the woman further punished; and the Negroes, dreading the consequences of their disobedience, rallied their fellows around them, and hastened the insurrection. Thousands armed themselves as best they could, fired the property on the plantations, and perpetrated a frightful and extensive series of outrages; yet no members of a religious society voluntarily participated in any of these acts of violence. Some few, indeed, were compelled to accompany the insurgents, and suffered death on that account; no discrimination being exercised, or defence admitted. A vast amount of property was destroyed; but the insurrection was immediately put down. The undisciplined and half-armed Negroes could not resist soldiers; and the revolt was instantly extinguished.

When the insurrection was crushed, the rage of the planters against the missionaries knew no bounds. They vehemently declared that all their predictions were verified; that the missionaries would ruin the colonies; and that they must be expelled. "The Colonial Church Union" was formed for the express purpose of expelling all sectaries from the island. In the prosecution of their labours, the Unionists displayed great energy. Slaves were mercilessly tortured, some of them even to death, because they would not give false evidence against their teachers. Chapels were

Order restored by the wisdom and energy of Earl Mulgrave.

pulled down ; Mission property destroyed to a great extent ; and missionaries ruthlessly persecuted. Happily, this malignant zeal over-did its work. The home-government was roused, and appointed a man to govern Jamaica equal to the emergency. The Duke of Manchester, who formerly ruled there, generally acted in concert with the planters. He was succeeded by the Earl of Belmore, who was feeble, timid, and vacillating, and was followed by the Earl of Mulgrave, then in the early prime of manhood, and remarkable alike for energy and discretion. This able governor displayed judgment and spirit equal to the occasion. The Church Union was put down. Officers of militia and magistrates, who had been convicted of gross misbehaviour, were dismissed by dozens. In a word, justice was done to all parties, as far at least as was possible with the co-existence of slavery ; and much was done to prepare the way for the final extinction of that vile abomination.

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1832 TO THE END OF 1833.

THE Conference of 1832 was held at Liverpool in a season of universal fear and alarm. The Asiatic cholera made its appearance in this country, in November, 1831, with fearful violence; and it was raging very fiercely in London, Liverpool, and other populous cities and towns. Our island has scarcely ever, in modern times, suffered from a pestilence so widely prevalent and fatal. On Dr. Clarke's return from Ireland, at the end of June, he observed that there were about fifty cases a day reported in Liverpool. In London, and even to the remotest parts of the island, the disease was advancing with equally fearful power. It cannot be wondered at, that in these circumstances the preachers attended the Conference under feelings of deep concern.

The Conference of 1832. Ravages of the cholera.

The Stationing Committee met on Tuesday, July seventeenth, and continued their labours through Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday, at nine in the forenoon, the Committee of the Auxiliary Fund met; and at three in the afternoon, the Financial Committee was appointed to meet for the examination of extraordinary deficiencies, and for the business of the Children's Fund. But this pressure of business could not divert the attention of the assembled preachers and friends from the terrible malady by which they were surrounded. A special prayer-meeting, to implore the Divine Majesty for the removal of this terrible scourge, that the lives of the preachers and

of the friends who received them might be preserved, and that the health of the town might be restored, was held at noon on Friday, when the large Brunswick chapel was filled to overflowing. Many of the most eminent of the preachers were remarkably drawn out in fervent prayer, particularly Entwisle, Reece, and Watson. The latter, indeed, prayed with a power and importunity which seemed, to those who worshipped with him, the result of very special divine influence. It produced a mighty effect at the time, and was the subject of general remark afterwards. These prayers were heard, the disease soon began to abate, and the preachers, and the families who entertained them, were all mercifully preserved.

Rev. Robert
Newton
president.
His vast
powers and
popularity.

The Rev. Robert Newton was placed in the presidential chair. This devoted minister had now gained an established reputation as one of the most laborious, zealous, and gifted preachers in the Connexion, and as, in certain points, pre-eminent among his brethren as a public speaker. His variety and power, in platform and pulpit addresses, were extraordinary; and his popularity unrivalled. But the great marvel of his career was his capability of vast physical labour and endurance. After preaching twice, and even three times, on the Sabbath, to crowded congregations in his own Circuit, the Monday morning saw him early "on the wheels," travelling at almost railway speed before railways were introduced; and the evening found him in some remote town, preaching with as much ease and energy as if he had just come from a "clerical furlough" of rest and recreation. He has often been heard to declare, that he never understood what his brethren meant by "being Mondayish." We remember on one occasion, when we had the privilege of entertaining him as our guest, he retired to rest about midnight, after a day of severe labour.

It was naturally supposed that it would be late next morning before he was astir. But soon after six his splendid voice was heard humming an old Methodist tune; and before eight he was below stairs as jocund as the lark. "Well, Mr. Newton," we inquired, "are you not weary after the labours of yesterday?" With a sweet and unaffected expression of gratitude, he lifted up his eyes, and replied, "No; I am strong to labour! strong to labour!"

Yet with all this incessant travelling, speaking or preaching twice a day, for six days in succession, he appeared in his own pulpit on the Sabbath with as much freshness and energy as the strongest of his colleagues, who had been going the weekly round of ordinary Circuit duty. These extra-parochial labours in no degree diminished the interest which he felt in his own Circuit. On this point his colleague, Dr. Beecham, bears this unquestionable testimony: "The interest which Mr. Newton took in his Circuit and pastoral duties was not exceeded by the zeal with which he sought to promote the cause of Christ by his more public labours. He endeavoured, when at home, to make up, as far as possible, the lack of service which resulted from his frequent absence. Immediately on his return from his long and arduous excursions, he threw himself into his Circuit work with a freshness which was surprising, and a zest which proved that he felt himself in his proper element, while he industriously redeemed the time by a close application to his duties as a Christian pastor."

In placing Robert Newton in the chair, the Wesleyan ministers a second time conferred the highest honour they had to bestow on one who had not only displayed the most attractive powers of oratory in a long course of zealous and disinterested labours, but who had ever toiled

not for self, or for party, but for the spread of the pure Gospel, and for the extension of scriptural religion in the world.

Dr. Clarke attended this Conference in an infirm state of health. He had gone to Ireland the preceding May, for the purpose of visiting his Irish schools; but he was prostrated with illness, and rendered unable to perform more than a very small part of the work he had marked out. On his return, in a very feeble condition, he spent a few days at Oakfield, near Liverpool, where he was visited by Mr. Bunting, then superintendent of the Liverpool North Circuit, who earnestly pressed him to remain until the approaching Conference; and urged that, by so doing, he might be able to serve the Shetland Mission, in which he had always taken the deepest interest. The Doctor received this attention and request very kindly, and referred to it in suitable terms in a letter to a friend. Though unable to remain, yet, after a brief visit to his family, he returned to Liverpool, where he was received with great attention and respect. As a proof of the affectionate esteem of his brethren, he was requested, by a unanimous vote of the assembly, to preach the usual sermon before the Conference, instead of the ex-president. The president, ex-president, Mr. Bunting, and other preachers waited on him at his lodgings to urge this request. Dr. Clarke showed that he fully appreciated and reciprocated this kindly feeling, by accepting the invitation. At first, indeed, he declined, on account of his want of health; but afterward consented to try, and was very graciously aided. "And a glorious time it was; many of the preachers appeared greatly affected," was his own description to his wife. It is evident, from all the accounts of this Conference, that the coldness and unpleasant feeling which had

Dr. Adam
Clarke at the
Conference.
Shetland
Mission.

arisen between Dr. Clarke and some of his brethren, on account of his having been made a supernumerary, was entirely removed. In the necessary absence of the president from the Conference to attend the Stationing Committee, Dr. Clarke presided over its deliberations. A handsome note, very grateful to his feelings, was appended to the Doctor's name as supernumerary in the Minutes. In a letter to his daughter, he says:—"To-day I am finally set down supernumerary for Windsor, with this 'N.B. Though Dr. Clarke is set down supernumerary for Windsor, he is not bound to that Circuit; but is most respectfully and affectionately requested to visit all parts of our Connexion, and labour according to his strength and convenience.' So I have a roving commission."

Dr. Clarke arranged with the Conference for the future management of the work in Shetland, and gave up the monies which he had received from benevolent individuals and held in trust, for the support of that Mission. His strength did not return, but with great mental vigour he felt conscious of much physical prostration. In his last letter to his family from the Conference, he said, "This constant travelling and labour, confinement in the Conference, &c., greatly fatigue me; and almost every day I am expecting to be knocked up: never was my mind more vigorous, never my body so near sinking. All here have taken me by the hand: I may live long on invitations."

The transactions of this Conference beyond the ordinary business were not of special importance. The increase of members in Great Britain and Ireland was about seven thousand, and on the several Mission Stations about eleven hundred. The preachers in some of the Circuits not having introduced the "Supplement to the Hymn Book"

Transactions
of the Con-
ference. Cha-
pel Fund,
and colonial
slavery.

into their regular religious services, a Minute was passed, directing that "the Supplement be used with the Large Hymn Book in all our chapels."

The resources of the Chapel Fund were now exhausted by a series of grants which had afforded immense relief to distressed chapel trusts, by enabling them to defray a great amount of current interest, which they were previously unable to meet. The beneficial operation of this Fund had called forth the co-operation of Trustees, and with the moderate final grants which the Committee had been able to give, £51,000 of chapel debts had been extinguished. It was accordingly found desirable to renew its beneficial operation. The Committee met, and passed a series of resolutions, recommending the formation of a further fund of £40,000, by contributions from chapel trusts, to be repaid with interest at four per cent., in ten instalments of ten per cent. each. It was hoped that by this means £60,000 more would be raised by the chapels to be assisted, and a gross sum of £100,000 of debt be cancelled. The Conference fully adopted and recommended the plan, and appointed a sub-committee, consisting of fifteen preachers, and fifteen lay trustees, to meet monthly throughout the year, for the purpose of expediting its arrangements, and preparing it for full operation by the ensuing Conference.

Earnest and energetic resolutions on colonial slavery were also adopted. In these, a solemn conviction of the great moral guilt which the system entailed on the country was emphatically asserted, and the injustice done to the Missions and missionaries by the outrageous conduct of mobs of white persons in some of the colonies was strongly set forth.

The Resolutions which had been most improperly passed

by a few missionaries in Jamaica some years before, and which, as previously stated, had been condemned by the Committee and the Conference, having been referred to in Jamaica by the enemies of Missions, the Conference repeated its condemnation of them, and expressed its gratitude to his Majesty's government for the uniform courtesy and consideration it had invariably evinced toward the Missionary Society in all its applications for protection, and redress of injuries; and especially for the assurance conveyed to the Committee by his Majesty's secretary of state for the colonial department, in a letter dated July twenty-first, that it is "the firm determination of his Majesty's government to exert to the utmost all the constitutional power of the crown, in order to punish the outrages of which the Committee have complained; and to afford full protection to all classes of his Majesty's subjects, so long as they shall conduct themselves with propriety, and act in obedience to the law." *

A serious disagreement and secession which had taken place at Derby during the preceding year, came under the consideration of the Conference. This rupture arose from unsoundness of doctrine,—a cause which has very seldom operated unfavourably on Methodism. Some of the leaders and local preachers, of rather erratic views and practices, added to their other eccentricities the notion, that "saving faith is not wrought in the human mind by divine influence as the gift of God; but is simply an exercise of powers inherent in our nature, and employed at our will." In connexion with this dogma they encouraged young women to preach, introduced great disorder under the plea of revivalism, and carried their extravagance to such an extent, that the superintendent had personally

The Derby
Faith seces-
sion.

* Octavo "Minutes," vol. vii., p. 176.

to interfere to maintain order in the band-meetings. He was opposed, and the greatest violence of feeling and language employed by the discontented party. The Derby Leaders' Meeting, finding that all kindly efforts of conciliation failed, finally found the ringleaders guilty of a violation of our rules, by a majority of twenty leaders to four. They were, of course, expelled from the Society. Thirteen local preachers out of fifty-three seceded; and ultimately about seven hundred out of nineteen hundred members left the Society. They formed a separate sect, built a chapel, and called themselves, "Arminian Methodists;" but they were popularly known as "the Derby Faith people," and have long since died out.*

The Conference, having considered the rise, progress, and character of this schism, adopted the following Minute: "That, under all the painful circumstances of the case at Derby, it appears to the Conference that the division which has taken place there could not have been avoided by brother Davis and his colleagues, without such a sacrifice of our established doctrine and discipline as it would have been criminal in them to make; and that they are justly entitled to, and do still fully retain, the undiminished affection and confidence of the Conference." †

This year will always be remarkable in the annals of Methodism for the death of an unusual number of the greatest and best men in the Methodist ministry. A few days before the opening of the Conference, and during the sittings of the preliminary Committees, the Rev. John Storey died of cholera, at Walworth, in the Lambeth Cir-

* "Facts against Fiction: or, A Statement of the real Causes which produced the Division among the Wesleyan Methodists in Derby. By GEORGE BROWNE MACDONALD."

† "Octavo Minutes," vol. vii., p. 175.

cuit. He was an able preacher, a devoted pastor, who visited his people at their homes, and knew them intimately, and a very pious Christian. When seized with the fatal disease, then so prevalent, his lamp was trimmed, and his light burning; and, as he himself said, he had "nothing to do but to die."

Dr. Adam Clarke had a deep-seated horror of the cholera. He deprecated the assembling of a large number of preachers at the Liverpool Conference. His language, in a letter to a ministerial friend, is remarkable. "I think few should go to Liverpool. A God not well pleased with the people, and the cholera, are there. Fifty persons of the Connexion will be sufficient to go thither." Yet, under a deep sense of duty, the venerable Doctor himself attended, "having several things of great importance to the Connexion to lay before the brethren," and thinking he might "never have another opportunity;" but he made his stay as short as possible. He preached before the Conference on Sunday, August fifth, and left the next morning, while the Conference was still sitting. He proceeded to Frome, where he attended a meeting on behalf of a religious charity on the ninth, and preached a sermon for the same object on Sunday the twelfth. He spent a week with some friends at Weston-super-Mare, and enjoyed the sea breezes of that delightful watering-place. He preached at Bristol on Sunday, the nineteenth, and spent the next day at Bath, where he received the distressing intelligence of an awful calamity which had afflicted his favourite Shetlanders. A very fine morning had tempted the fishermen of those Isles to follow their usual employment; but a tremendous gale arose, which drove some of the boats far away to sea, and destroyed many others, with their little

The last
weeks of Dr.
Clarke's life,
His death.

crews. The sad result was the loss of about thirty boats, containing five or six men each. Among these were nine class-leaders, and many members; the whole leaving forty widows, and two hundred orphans. This was a crushing stroke for Dr. Clarke; and he was the less able to bear it, in consequence of his feeble state of health. Weak as he was, however, he felt that he must do all in his power to administer consolation and help to the bereaved sufferers. He hastened home, where he arrived on Tuesday the twenty-first, and wrote many letters. Having discharged his most pressing engagements, he left on Saturday for the house of a friend at Bayswater, in order to preach there the following Sabbath morning. He complained of being unwell, could eat no supper, and soon retired to bed. Early in the morning he called up his friend, telling him that he was ill, and must immediately return home. But he was too ill to be removed, suffering from a fatal attack of cholera. Every effort of medical skill was resorted to in vain. He sank rapidly, and died soon after eleven o'clock the same night. Thus fell "a prince and a great man" in the Israel of Methodism.*

Thomas
Stanley.

A few weeks after the death of Dr. A. Clarke, the Rev. Thomas Stanley followed him into the world of spirits. He was a minister of very agreeable manners; and distinguished for a pious and zealous discharge of the duties of his office. He was an eminently successful instrument in the conversion of sinners. Toward the close of life, his

* Mrs. Mary Clarke, widow of Dr. Adam Clarke, died at Stoke Newington, about the end of 1836, after a few hours' illness. The preachers and leaders of the City Road Society resolved to show their respect for the departed, and made arrangements for having a funeral sermon preached in that chapel on the occasion. The resolution of the Leaders' Meeting, requesting the superintendent to do this, was transmitted by the Rev. R. Treffry to the eldest son of the deceased lady, and suitably acknowledged.

spirituality of mind daily increased. Having laboured with much acceptance and success in several important Circuits, and been successively governor of Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools, he was stationed in the Sixth London Circuit. He had entered on the third year of ministerial duty there, when he was taken away by a sudden death. He suffered from disease of the heart ; but, although he occasionally felt pain and inconvenience from this cause, there seemed no reason to expect so early and fatal an issue. He had visited Mr. Charles Wesley, the celebrated organist, at the request of the Book Committee, to solicit the loan of the portrait of his father, the poet of Methodism, for the purpose of having it engraved. Returning through the Paddington New Road, with the picture in his hand, he felt exhausted, and rested on the base of some palisades. His fainting state attracted the attention of a benevolent lady ; and a medical gentleman who was passing gave every assistance in his power, but in vain. Without a sigh or a groan, this excellent minister passed from this world to a better, on the ninth of October, 1832, in the thirty-eighth year of his ministerial career, aged fifty-nine.

A month had not elapsed from the death of Stanley, John James, when the Connexion was called to sustain another bereavement of no common order, in the departure of the Rev. John James, one of the missionary secretaries. He was a native of Liverpool, where his mother was a very pious and excellent class-leader. Converted to God when young, his early manhood displayed a maturity of piety and steadiness of zeal beyond his years. He was received on trial by the Conference of 1807. His eminent abilities, noble spirit, and hallowed temper, soon recommended him to the most important spheres of labour. He ministered successively, and with great acceptance, at Wrexham,

Shrewsbury, Glasgow, Macclesfield, Hull, Leeds, Halifax, and London North, after which he became one of the General Secretaries to the Missions, and discharged the duties of this office with great acceptance and success to the day of his death. As early as the summer of 1831 symptoms of apoplexy appeared, and he had several times partial attacks of paralysis; but, intent on his Master's work, he struggled on, although it was evident that his spirit was deeply impressed with the slender tenure on which his earthly existence was held. The last Sabbath of his life, October fourth, he preached at City Road Chapel, when he felt a pain in the head, and was observed to labour under a difficulty of recollection. On returning to the vestry after the service, his pain was greatly increased; and he was so unwell as to require a coach to take him home. Soon after he reached his house, he sank into a stupor, accompanied with great difficulty of breathing, from which, although the most prompt remedies were applied, he never rallied. Unable to speak, he yet seemed conscious and very devout. In this state he lingered until Tuesday, when his happy spirit escaped to heaven. He died in the forty-seventh year of his age, and the twenty-sixth of his itinerancy.

George
Whitfield.

Nor were these the only losses sustained by the Connexion this year. Among others, of noble character and holy life, George Whitfield, one of the oldest ministers in the Connexion, was called to his reward. His early life is unknown: but his ministerial history is a somewhat remarkable one. He was born about the year 1753; and, in 1781, Wesley writes, "Sunday, August 19th, at eight in the evening, I took coach with my new fellow-traveller, George Whitfield." In 1783 he accompanied Wesley to Holland; and in 1784 he was with him in Scotland.

From this it appears that, for some years, he was the travelling companion of Wesley; but during this period his name, as far as we can ascertain, does not appear on the Minutes; and we are at a loss to know in what capacity he attended upon the Founder of Methodism. His travelling with Wesley seems to have served for the ordinary probation; and hence, in 1785, he appears as one of the preachers in the London Circuit, but not among those received on trial. The next year he stands for London as a supernumerary; and, during the two following years, his name disappears altogether from the list of Stations. In 1789 it is again found in connexion with the London Circuit; but the record is, "George Whitfield, *book-steward*;" an office which he sustained until 1803. In 1804 he is appointed "assistant book-steward;" and in 1805 he became a supernumerary, and continued to reside at Tottenham until the close of his long life. During the many years of his comparative retirement, he gained the respect of all who knew him, by his upright conduct and his efforts to do good. His last affliction was very long and painful; but it was graciously sanctified in meetening him "for the inheritance of the saints in light." He died in peace, December twenty-fourth, 1832.

Joseph Sanders, a pious and devoted minister, was suddenly taken off by cholera, after a ministerial career of twenty-four years. Francis Truscott, a still more distinguished minister, and, like Sanders, a Cornishman, closed a long and honourable ministerial career at Plymouth, February seventeenth, 1833, after having travelled forty-four years. His judgment was sound; his heart full of Christian simplicity. He possessed a rich fund of wit and humour; which, being subordinated to a sanctified judgment, was but sparingly used, except when the defence of

Joseph
Sanders and
Francis
Truscott.

truth might be promoted; and then it was employed with irresistible force. The name of Robert Martin, a native of Ireland, ought to be had in remembrance. He was a minister of more than ordinary ability. He laboured with great acceptance, and died in the fifty-second year of his age at Portsea, having travelled twenty-nine years.

Watson's
character
and death.

But, amid this sad mortality, no event plunged the Connexion into such profound sorrow, as the death of Richard Watson; a loss felt more acutely, because it seemed premature. From the period of his return to the ministry in 1812, he had constantly advanced in the esteem of his brethren, and of the Connexion at large. In every emergency he was equally fitted for counsel and for action. No difficulty appeared to exceed his powers. He was alike self-possessed, able, and successful, whether he had to detect and repel error, when presented in the most subtle and artful entanglements; to defend the truth, if opposed by the most practised and erudite writers of the day; or to vindicate the oppressed, and advocate the cause of liberty, before the most eminent statesmen or diplomatists. But, eminent as Watson was in all these respects, it was on the platform, when advocating the cause of Christian Missions, and pleading for the emancipation of the slave, and, above all, in the pulpit, with all his mighty powers engaged in the exhibition of redeeming mercy, and the proclamation of the Gospel of Christ, that he shone forth in his meridian splendour. He touched everything with a master hand, and displayed everywhere the soul of a Christian. His death was eminently peaceful and happy. "Through the grace of his divine Saviour, with his characteristic strength of mind, he firmly grasped and applied his Christian principles; and they sustained his faith in his walk through 'the valley of the shadow of death.' 'I

am a poor vile worm,' said he; 'but then the worm is permitted to crawl out of the earth into the garden of the Lord.....

'I shall behold His face,
I shall His power adore,
And sing the wonders of His grace
For evermore!'

In a state of high ecstasy, but a short time before deprived of the power of connected speech, he exclaimed, 'We shall see strange sights some day; not different, however, from what we may realize by faith. But it is not this, not the glitter of glory, not the diamond and topaz. No, it is God; He is all in all.''' He died, January eighth, 1833, having nearly completed his fifty-second year.

"They are gone,—
The mighty, the beloved,—where all the storms
Of Time are quell'd for ever, and where Death
Himself is vanquish'd. He, whose sovereign word
Said to the waves, in their wild tumult, 'Peace!
Be still!' hath call'd them to their place of rest.
Therefore to THEE thanksgiving shall ascend:
O LORD OUR GOD, THOU DOEST ALL THINGS WELL!"

Almost immediately after the Conference, an Act of Parliament for the total abolition of British colonial slavery on the first of August, 1834, received the royal assent; and provided a grant of twenty millions sterling, for meeting the pecuniary losses occasioned to the slave-owners by the termination of their property in their fellow-creatures. We are confident that the history of the world does not afford a parallel instance of national magnanimity, justice, and sacrifice. Here was a nation with an open Bible in her hand, and professing the religion of Christ. Distressed by her connexion with an enormous iniquity,

Abolition of
British
colonial
slavery.

which continually produced intolerable suffering and degradation to eight hundred thousand human beings,—an iniquity meriting the curse of God, and the execrations of men,—she boldly dared, at this vast cost, to free herself from the foul and hateful burden, and the blood-guiltiness which it involved.

Under the sanction of British law and usage, there had been acquired an actual money value in these thousands of men, women, and children. It was confessed that the right to this property was contrary to all divine law, and to every decision of human reason; but it was an undoubted fact, that the property existed, and by law belonged to certain proprietors. It was further seen, that this property, unrighteous and unreasonable as it was, had not been created or acquired so much by the individuals who possessed it, as by the nation. Many of the West India proprietors had received the plantations and slaves in bequests from their forefathers, charged with heavy liabilities and demands. To emancipate the slaves, therefore, and destroy the money value which their masters had in them, without giving any compensation, would have been to visit the national iniquity upon a class, and to render justice to the slave by inflicting ruinous injustice on the master. In this difficulty, the British Parliament determined to do justice to all parties, by liberating the slaves, and making ample compensation to the proprietors.

But the amount of national sacrifice which this measure involved was very great. What nation but England ever paid down twenty millions for any public object, much less for the purpose of washing away a national sin, and responding to the claims of religion and humanity, on behalf of the most oppressed and degraded of the human race? We regard this act

as one of the greatest and grandest deeds of Britain's moral power. No triumph of her arms, in scenes of blood; no effort of her wisdom, in statesmanship or science; nothing in her history stands out more brightly than the just award made to the injured slave, and the righteous manner in which it was carried out, although perhaps with too much prodigality to the proprietors.

It is some consolation to Wesleyans to know, that, having taken a very prominent and useful part in this struggle for the freedom of the slave, they had some honourable share in the success which crowned all these exertions. The evidence which places this information before us is full of interest. Some time in December, 1832, Sir T. F. Buxton wrote to Watson, informing him, that the government had at length determined to co-operate with the friends of the enslaved Negro in devising some practicable scheme of emancipation, and asking his advice. This letter reached Watson only two or three weeks before his death, when he was in a very feeble state of health; but the prospect of such a glorious consummation nerved him for the task; and he immediately wrote a long letter, expressing to Sir T. F. Buxton his views on the subject.* He fully approved all the most important provisions afterwards incorporated into the measure carried through Parliament. His first principle was worthy a Christian statesman. "My principle is to *do right*, and to do it advisedly." From this document we also learn the origin of the colonial bishoprics. Watson says that, by desire of Lord Bathurst, he had a long conversation with Mr. Wilmot Horton, the under-secretary for the colonies, on the subject of providing what Lord Bathurst regarded as a more efficient agency for the religious culture of the Negro

The Rev.
Richard
Watson's
last
thoughts on
slavery and
Missions.

* Watson's Memoirs, p. 590.

population of the West Indies. "We differed," he says, "on this point : government wished to place our missionaries under the *control* of the parish clergy ; whilst we, though perfectly willing to co-operate with them in the most friendly spirit, insisted upon being left at perfect liberty to pursue our own plans, which, from an experience of near forty years, we had found to be efficient. Thus the matter broke off, and the West Indies were then erected into bishoprics." As Sir T. F. Buxton alluded to increased religious means as necessary to accompany emancipation, Watson assured him that the views of the Methodists on this point were unchanged ; and added, "I must in fairness therefore say, that now, as then, we can be parties to no arrangement whatever which does not leave us to go on according to our own established plans."

The emancipation not only rendered justice to the oppressed Negro, and wiped away ineffable disgrace from our country ; it also attracted public attention, and diverted the minds of the people from other and mischievous objects. The strenuous and long-continued efforts put forth to secure it, allayed the excitement raised in the political agitation and fervour which carried the Reform Bill. It acted as a safety-valve to the public mind ; and directed a vast magazine of moral power, which could scarcely otherwise have been diverted from injurious applications, to the accomplishment of a noble and glorious deliverance for the wretched slaves.*

* "The leading provisions of the Act of Abolition were these. All children under six years of age, or born after August first, 1834, are declared free ; all registered slaves above the age of six years become, from the same date, apprenticed labourers, divided into two principal classes,—prædial, or those employed in agriculture, and the non-prædial ; the apprenticeships of the former to expire August first, 1838, of the latter August first, 1840. The hours of labour of the prædial apprentice not to exceed forty-five in any one

Even the occupation of the public mind in the pursuit of a great and worthy object was not sufficient to prevent restless and turbulent spirits struggling for the removal of burdens, and the reformation of defects, beyond what was either prudent or possible. Monster meetings were held in different parts of the country for the repeal of the assessed taxes. The changes introduced by Sir R. Peel in 1819, respecting the currency, were severely canvassed; and both in public meetings and in Parliament they were charged with being the cause of all the distress and commercial stagnation through which the country had passed.

Nor did the Established Church escape attack in these turbulent times. The infamous doings of the Colonial Church Union in Jamaica reacted at home very injuriously; and various projects were formed for assailing the temporalities of the national establishment, by holding large anti-tithe meetings, and introducing a course of active agitation on the subject. This disposition of the public mind found some relief and gratification by the Bill, passed in the first Session of the Reformed Parliament, respecting the Irish Church. The number of Irish bishops was to be reduced from twenty-two to twelve, by the union of the sees, as the existing prelates died off. The income of the

week, and for which they are to be paid, either by being boarded and lodged, or by receiving a sum in money weekly. By the transition into the apprenticeship state, the slave immediately entered into the chief immunities of a freeman; he could not be arbitrarily punished by his master, and became eligible to give evidence in criminal and civil courts, to serve on juries and in the militia. The chief difficulty was the question of compensation. At first it was proposed to grant the West Indian proprietors a loan of £15,000,000; but this was ultimately changed into a gift of £20,000,000, which secured the friendly co-operation of most of the planters."—WADE'S "British History," p. 939.

Archbishop of Armagh was reduced from £14,000 to £10,000, and that of all the other sees worth more than £4,000 was reduced to that sum, except the bishopric of Derry, which had an income of about £12,000, and was at once brought down to £8,000, and eventually to £6,000. The payments of vestry-cess and first-fruits were also abolished, and various other changes made, by which, in reality, the maintenance of the Protestant Church in Ireland ceased to be a Catholic grievance, its cost being almost entirely thrown on the Protestant land proprietors.

Conference
of 1833, at
Manchester.
The Rev.
Richard
Treffry pre-
sident.

The Conference of 1833 assembled at Manchester; and the preliminary Committees having transacted their business, the session was opened on Wednesday, July thirty-first. The Rev. Richard Treffry was elected president, and the Rev. Edmund Grindrod secretary. Treffry was descended from a respectable family in Cornwall, was a native of that county, and entered the Wesleyan ministry in 1792. He was not favoured with the advantages of a liberal education; but when he entered on the sacred office, he devoted himself to study with so much diligence and perseverance, that he became a good English scholar, and acquired an extensive acquaintance with the works of the best divines. As a theologian, his views were correct, clear, and comprehensive; and his preaching powers were far above mediocrity. His sermons, says an official account, "were well studied and arranged, and did not fail to convey to his hearers 'the whole counsel of God' in language plain, and forcible, and affectionate." But the grand prominent features of Richard Treffry's mind were sterling integrity and inflexible independence. His manner was rough, and sometimes approached harshness and austerity; yet he possessed great tenderness and kindness of heart.

Such qualities and manners would prevent Treffry being in any sense a party man. He certainly was not associated with those whose talents and energy gave them a preponderating influence in the Conference, by any closer ties than those of the ordinary ministerial brotherhood of Methodist preachers. Yet, in the presence of all this influence, he was placed in the chair by a respectable majority; a fact which clearly proves, that although Wesleyan ministers may willingly concede power and influence to those whose talents and virtues entitle them to this distinction, they are nevertheless jealous of their independence, and retain in their own hands the award of office and of honour.

The prosperity of the work of God was attested by an increase of above twenty-four thousand in Great Britain and Ireland, and of nearly two thousand on the Mission Stations. Such a gracious result of Methodist agency, under all the unfavourable influences of the times, was most gratifying, and furnished decisive proof of the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. The Annual Pastoral Address contains an ample recognition of the grand means of spreading the Gospel throughout the world "by accompanying 'the truth as it is in Jesus' with the copious effusions of the Holy Spirit, to 'turn men from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to' the service of the living 'God.' The special blessing of God upon means chiefly and vigorously directed to this one point, upon the doctrines we preach, the discipline we exercise, and the public and private ordinances, so scriptural, so simple, so spiritual, which we as a Body enjoy, is the great secret of the extraordinary success of Methodism. Those who attribute this success to the mere ecclesiastical policy of our venerable Founder, and of those who have followed him in the continued application

General
prosperity of
Methodism.
Union with
Canada.

of his system, have done too much honour to the genius and sagacity of the Methodists." *

A union was established between the Wesleyan Mission in Canada, and the Methodist Episcopal Church of that province. This was brought about principally by the Rev. Robert Alder, who had laboured as a missionary some years in British North America, and was familiar with the inconveniences arising from the separate and collateral action of two religious communities holding the same doctrines, and exercising substantially the same discipline, in the same localities. A very singular series of circumstances put this knowledge into requisition for very important purposes.

Peter Jones, a converted Indian chief, who had been appointed a missionary to his countrymen, visited England early in 1831, to solicit monetary aid in support of the Indian Missions under the management of the Canadian Conference. He communicated information to the Missionary Committee, and, in his various public addresses, to the Connexion at large, respecting the spiritual wants of thousands of emigrants from Great Britain and Ireland, settled in Upper Canada. While this subject was under consideration, the committee received such unexpected offers of pecuniary assistance in extending English Methodism in Upper Canada, that they determined to send ten or twelve missionaries with as little delay as possible. Two were immediately sent,—one to York, the seat of government, where a chapel had been built by persons who requested the appointment of a missionary; the other to an Indian settlement on the river St. Clair, where he commenced his labours under the auspices of the Lieutenant-Governor, Sir John Colborne. Robert Alder, who was

* Octavo "Minutes," vol. vii., p. 306.

going as the representative of the Committee to Lower Canada, was requested to visit the Upper Province, to obtain information for the guidance of the Committee in appointing the other missionaries about to be sent. Alder was invited to attend the Upper Canada Conference, then about to be held, when the subject of the English Missions was to be taken into consideration. "After much deliberation, the Conference, apprehending that evil might arise from two bodies of Methodists carrying on their respective plans independently of each other; and persuaded that the common object, the spread of true religion in Upper Canada, would, under the divine blessing, be much more effectually accomplished by placing the energies of both bodies under the same management and control; resolved to make proposals of union to the English Conference, and to place the whole of their Missions under the care of its Missionary Committee." These proposals were received with kind and brotherly feelings by the English Missionary Committee, and the sending of more missionaries was delayed until the issue of this movement was known.

The Rev. Egerton Ryerson, the representative of the Canada Conference, brought with him an address proposing the union to the English Conference assembled at Manchester; and at a suitable period of the session the subject was carefully considered. With some modifications, the Canadian proposal was adopted: the Rev. George Marsden was appointed the president of the next Canadian Conference; and the Rev. Joseph Stinson was directed to accompany him, and to remain as the general superintendent of the Missions.

Another subject came before this Conference, which, in some respects, was invested with painful interest,—the case

The "Christian Advocate" newspaper, its altered character and evil influence.

of the "Christian Advocate" newspaper, a weekly periodical which had been in existence for some time. At first it professed to be decidedly Wesleyan, and claimed to be regarded, in some sense, as an unofficial organ of the Connexion. For a considerable time its friendly bearing to a great extent sustained this profession. Many preachers contributed regularly to its pages; others strongly recommended it to the Connexion by a testimonial under their names; and it was generally taken in respectable Methodist families. It obtained further currency from the well known fact, that its editor was the son of a highly respectable and venerated minister, the Rev. John Stephens, who had recently been president, and the brother of another Methodist preacher, the Rev. J. R. Stephens. So fully did these circumstances identify the paper with Wesleyan Methodism, that many preachers and respectable laymen regarded the week as not quite filled up unless they had seen the "Advocate."

Unhappily, however, the intense political excitement of the times was too strong for the Wesleyan virtue of the conductors. By slow, and at first almost imperceptible, degrees, but afterwards boldly and fully, it drifted into the mid-current of ecclesiastical and political radicalism. Its previous *status* gave it the power of working immense mischief. Few persons were disposed at once to give it up. It was still the only weekly vehicle of connexional information, and was almost necessary to those who wished to know what was passing in different parts of Methodism. Hence multitudes continued to read it, while they strongly condemned many of its sentiments. The paper was conducted with ability, its articles were exceedingly plausible, and, in the absence of any counteracting agency, few were able to detect its fallacies.

The extent to which the members and congregations of Methodism were perverted by this means, is beyond calculation. The greater part of the troubles which soon afterward afflicted the Body, either owed their existence to this agency, or were greatly aggravated by it. It also dealt with other religious bodies after its own mind, without any regard to the courtesies usually held inviolate by religious communities toward each other. But as it professed to be a Methodist paper, and to represent the views of Wesleyan Methodists, its reflections and censures compromised the Connexion, and involved it in difficulty.

In such circumstances the case was the subject of a long and earnest debate at this Conference. The discussion was raised in regard to the strong terms of censure and misrepresentation which the "Christian Advocate" had employed respecting Mr. Bunting, particularly with reference to the vote he had given at a recent Liverpool election in favour of Viscount Sandon. The following resolution was therefore moved and seconded: "The Conference, having viewed with feelings of very great indignation the base and malignant attempts which have been made by a mercenary press, and certain evil-disposed persons, to calumniate the actions and motives of the Rev. Jabez Bunting, and to destroy his usefulness in the Church, gladly embrace this opportunity of unanimously expressing their Christian and fraternal sympathy with their much esteemed brother, in the unjust and wicked aspersions which have been cast upon his character; their steady and undeviating confidence in his fidelity and integrity as a minister and a Christian; and their perfect and cordial satisfaction with the whole of his conduct during the year."

Animated
debate in
the Con-
ference on
the subject.

A motion of this sort was most unusual in this assembly, and must have been called for by very peculiar circum-

stances. As we have before us notes of the debate, it may be interesting to show briefly the sentiments of leading ministers on this important subject. Theophilus Lessey spoke with great ability against the course pursued by the "Christian Advocate." William Atherton in very strong terms condemned the conduct of those preachers who wrote for it. James Bromley protested that he had never contributed a line or a penny in support of the "Advocate." Robert Newton followed on the same side, and deprecated preachers pursuing a course which had not the sanction of Methodism, or of the Conference. George Marsden reminded preachers who contributed to its columns, that their writings were frequently read in pothouses by drunkards and scoffers. Mr. Waugh, on behalf of the Irish people, maintained that Mr. Bunting belonged to the Methodist world, and that if the Conference injured him, it injured itself, and, indeed, committed suicide. Valentine Ward said he had at first supported the paper, because he knew and respected a Methodist preacher's son. William Naylor pointed out the impropriety of Methodist preachers contributing to a paper in which they would certainly come into collision with their brethren. James Dixon spoke of Mr. Bunting as being too great to be injured by things so little; yet his happiness might be affected by it, and the Conference ought to express some censure on the paper. Mr. Ryerson stated the estimation in which Mr. Bunting was held by the Methodist world; and said that the "Christian Advocate," in consequence of the signatures of certain preachers, was abroad considered an organ of the Methodist Conference. Richard Reece expressed a hope that all the preachers who had in any way given their names to the support of the paper would withdraw them. Thomas Rowland said, that he had been charged with contributing

to the "Advocate," and thought a Methodist preacher, like a female, ought not only to be without fault, but above suspicion. He would sooner put his hand into the fire, than say any thing against the Conference or against any preacher. Richard Treffry said that some of the Welsh Preachers had taken that paper, and circulated articles from it. John Bowers expressed his sense of the debt the Connexion owed to Mr. Bunting on account of his having done so much for Methodism. Edward Jones, editor of the Welsh Magazine, said he had taken the "Christian Advocate," but always avoided taking or circulating from it any thing that was bad ; but he was determined to give it up. John S. Stamp read the resolutions adopted in the Liverpool District on the subject. The president then submitted the motion to the Conference, and declared that he never saw such a numerous show of hands on any motion. Mr. Bunting expressed his deep sense of the great kindness of his brethren ; "he was deeply and eternally obliged."

Mr. Morley then argued that the Conference ought to clear themselves from any supposed participation in the "Christian Advocate's" attack on the London Missionary Society. He thought a letter should be sent to the secretaries of that Society, and moved the following resolution : "That a respectful and affectionate letter be sent to the secretaries of the London Missionary Society, disclaiming, on the part of the Conference, any connexion whatever with the 'Christian Advocate' newspaper, and strongly disapproving of the attacks on their Missions which have been made in that paper." John Beecham seconded the motion. James Bromley opposed it, as tending to make the paper more important than it merited.

Jacob Stanley and Richard Waddy supported the motion, which was put and carried.

It was then proposed that those preachers who had recommended the "Christian Advocate" should either publicly withdraw their approval, or sign a protest against the manner in which it had lately been conducted.

Isaac
Bradnack.

Some preachers of more than ordinary note were removed by death between the Conference of 1833 and the end of the year. ISAAC BRADNACK was brought to the knowledge of salvation under the ministry of the Rev. Samuel Bradburn, was soon afterward called to preach the Gospel in the West Indies, and laboured with great success in Barbadoes and Jamaica. "On his return to England the hand of the Lord was with him, and in some Circuits where he travelled the seals of his ministry were numerous. His great and unremitting exertions brought on the complaint which led to his lamented death. Through a long and severe affliction he was enabled by divine grace 'to possess his soul in patience.'" He died on Sunday, October sixth.

James Mac-
donald.

JAMES MACDONALD was a native of Enniskillen, in Ireland. Early in life he obtained salvation through faith in Christ. The witness of the Spirit which he then received, he never lost; and after the lapse of half a century he would refer to this period with holy delight. He began to preach when about nineteen, and four years afterward was called by Wesley to the work of the ministry. He laboured eleven years in Ireland, and then came to England; where, with a blameless character and general acceptance, he continued his ministry during thirty-one years. He was a diligent

student, and his intellectual acquirements were respectable. He was distinguished by his love of peace, and his abhorrence of evil-speaking. In February, 1831, he was seized with paralysis. Supposing his end near, he exclaimed, "I am dying; but, thank God, all is right." He was confined to his bed fifteen months, suffered much pain, and became debilitated in body and mind; yet he frequently praised God, and expressed a confident hope of being "for ever with the Lord." He died, October eighteenth, 1833, in the seventy-third year of his age. He was the author of the first "Memoir of the Rev. Joseph Benson," and of some other works; one of which, on securing to the children of Methodists a regular Christian education, deserved better circulation than it obtained.

DR. JAMES TOWNLEY died at Ramsgate, December twelfth, 1833. As already stated, he was president of the Conference in 1829; and his assiduous devotion to the arduous duties of that high office during his visit to Ireland in 1830, and the labours devolving on him at the ensuing English Conference, probably laid the foundation of that debility and painful affliction which terminated his life. Towards the close of his last illness, his sufferings became extreme, but his mind was graciously supported. He died in great peace and in the full triumph of faith.

James
Townley.

DANIEL ISAAC did not terminate his earthly career until March twenty-first, 1834; but he was taken from the ministry, and hopelessly laid aside, in 1833. While in Manchester, fulfilling a preaching engagement on behalf of the Gravel Lane Sunday School, May twentieth, 1832, he preached in the morning; but before the evening service he was seized with paralysis, which for some time prostrated his mental powers, and even threatened fatal results; but he so far rallied, that in

Daniel
Isaac.

July he was able to preach, and at the Conference was sufficiently recovered to be appointed to a Circuit. His station, in accordance with his own desire, was York,—his third appointment to that city. He and his friends hoped that he would soon be fully restored to health. He was able only to preach a few times. The struggle between a mind naturally active and vigorous, and a body worn out by disease, was long and painful, but terminated in a happy death.

Success of
Missions,—
Stockholm,
Germany,
New Zea-
land, &c.

The work on the widely-extended Mission Stations proceeded with great energy and success. A gracious Providence so far shielded the missionaries from danger, that notwithstanding their fearful exposures, only two died in 1833. Abraham Whitehouse, after labouring in the West Indies twenty years, died in peace, January tenth, 1833. Edward Grieves, who had been five years in the same field, departed in the full triumph of faith, at Demerara, on July thirty-first, 1833.

On the continent of Europe there was cheering success. At Stockholm the ministry of the Rev. George Scott was turning sinners from darkness to light, and, to some extent at least, rousing a slumbering national Church from its apathy, and bringing it to appreciate evangelical truth, and to aid in promoting the circulation of the Holy Scriptures. The kingdom of Würtemberg witnessed a novel exhibition of the power of Gospel truth. Mr. C. G. Müller, an exhorter and class-leader, was greatly blessed to many of his countrymen. Unsupported by wealth, power, or influence, this godly man brought the great truths of the Gospel to bear upon the minds of his neighbours, until many of them became decidedly pious. Some of these were endued by the Head of the Church with

gifts which rendered them valuable “fellow-workers unto the kingdom of God,” and enabled Müller to extend his operations to the various villages scattered among the woods and mountainous districts of that country. These efforts had now been crowned with such success, that he had twenty-three pious subordinate helpers, and twenty-six places for stated religious worship; while the number of persons in the religious societies was three hundred and twenty-six. Nor was the result of this movement superficial; its reality and gracious character were evinced by the most satisfactory evidence. The converts regularly attended the worship of God in their respective churches,—a duty previously neglected,—and gave a cheerful and conscientious attention to the sanctification of the Sabbath in a country where that day was generally profaned. And what is perhaps still more decisive, they were proof against the seductive influences of intemperance in circumstances of great temptation.

Even from the darkest portions of heathenism in the wide Pacific, sounds of thanksgiving and joy were heard. The missionaries labouring in New Zealand, where the standard of the Cross had been so recently planted, and where man had previously been savage and cannibal, sunk in the deepest degradation, reported the conversion and happy death of a chief who had lived in heathenism almost all his life. In the Friendly Isles, also, the work of God had been crowned with great success. The Mission was commenced in 1822; and such had been the effects of the Gospel in these few years, that there were four thousand four hundred communicants and accredited members of Society, and four thousand four hundred and forty-four adults and children receiving education and Christian instruction in the schools.

Translation
of the Scrip-
tures and
institution
of the Sab-
bath in
South
Africa.

The Mission cause in South Africa also made satisfactory progress. Great efforts were put forth to increase the vigour and effect of its evangelizing agency, and to give permanence to the conquests already achieved. As nothing could more effectually conduce to this end than the free circulation of the Holy Scriptures amongst the people in their own language, earnest efforts were made to effect a purpose so difficult, and yet so very desirable. The Rev. William Shaw, chairman of the Albany District, impressed with the importance of this object, laboured assiduously to secure it. Under his direction, the Rev. W. B. Boyce was sent out with special reference to the systematizing of that language, and to the labour of translation. A letter from Mr. Boyce affords important information respecting the progress of this work, and exhibits the principles and mode in which it was prosecuted. It shows at once, that the persons charged with this great undertaking were alive to its vast importance, and were more anxious to produce a useful transcript of the sacred volume in the vernacular language of this heathen land, than to obtain linguistic celebrity. Their progress in a task so difficult, and the success which crowned their exertions, were truly remarkable.

One of the most noticeable events in the history of South Africa occurred on the twenty-ninth of October, 1833. Three Kaffir chiefs, in solemn convention, announced, by formal proclamation, the institution of the Christian Sabbath, and made its sacred observance the law of their tribes. Deeds of slaughter and blood are frequently emblazoned on the page of history as glorious; here is an act truly so; and Pato, Kama, and Kongo, proved themselves, by this enactment, the benefactors of their race and the fathers of their people.

The year 1833 was the last of the life of Samuel Drew,

the literary local preacher of St. Austell, whose extraordinary entrance on a course of authorship has been already mentioned.* In the brief sketch there given, Drew was described as a shoemaker, who, by laborious and successful efforts, attained a respectable position as an author. In 1805 he relinquished his trade, and devoted himself fully to literary pursuits. This decisive step was taken under an engagement with Dr. Coke. Having given up his whole time to the promotion of Christian Missions, the Doctor was unable to prosecute important literary works which he had projected, and for which he had made large preparations. By placing in the hands of Drew the materials already collected, the good Doctor's intentions were fulfilled in the publication of the "Commentary," the "History of the West Indies," and other works. In the mean time, by the good offices of Dr. Adam Clarke, Drew had been introduced to the conductors of the Eclectic and other Reviews, which afforded him some profitable literary employment.

The literary labours and death of Samuel Drew, M.A.

After the death of Coke,—besides successfully conducting a controversy, which attracted considerable attention in the West of England, against some Socinian writers at Falmouth,—Drew undertook his largest work, the "History of Cornwall." Fortescue Hichens, Esq., had projected and advertised this work; but, before it was fairly begun, he sickened and died, leaving the entire labour in the hands of Drew. "The Life of Dr. Coke" came next, and an "Essay on the Being and Perfections of God" followed. He then removed to Liverpool, to undertake the editorial management of a new monthly periodical, "The Imperial Magazine," for Fisher, the eminent bookseller. This enterprise was successful, and

* Vol. ii., pp. 369-374, 665.

the miscellany proved a very interesting and useful publication. Drew conducted it as long as his health continued.

In 1824 the Senate of Marischal College, Aberdeen, conferred on Mr. Drew the degree of M.A. The business of Mr. Fisher having been removed to London, on the destruction of the Caxton printing office, at Liverpool, by fire, in 1821, Drew thenceforth resided in the metropolis. Both in Liverpool and London he acted as a local preacher. His sermons everywhere attracted attention, and secured for him respect and veneration. His last days were marked by unbroken serenity and great peace. He died happy in God, at Helston, in Cornwall, whilst on a visit to his daughter, March twenty-ninth, 1833, aged sixty-eight years.

BOOK VIII.

THE LEGAL ESTABLISHMENT OF WESLEYAN METHODISM.

CHAPTER I.

JOSEPH RAYNER STEPHENS : HIS CONDUCT, TRIAL,
AND SUSPENSION.

THE existence of considerable political excitement throughout the country, during 1833, and its occasional aggression on the Established Church, have been already distinctly recognised. Much more, indeed, might have been said on this topic, had it been more immediately connected with our subject. One single fact sufficiently indicates the state of public feeling and language in reference to the established clergy :—from his place in the House of Peers, the Lord Chancellor of England authoritatively warned the bench of bishops “to set their house in order !” It cannot excite surprise if, with such an example before them, the common people learned “to speak evil of dignities,” and to clamour for the abolition of every impost levied for the support of the national Establishment, without regard to the sources whence these were originally derived, or to the salutary purposes which, notwithstanding the existence of many abuses, they generally subserved.

Political excitement directed against the temporalities of the Church.

Throughout all this season of popular excitement, neither the feverish state of the public mind, nor the inflammatory

language of orators and the press, diverted the Wesleyan community from their usual temperate demeanour. The Methodists, generally although as fully alive as any other part of the population to the importance of removing all abuses, and improving the national polity under the guidance of wisdom and righteousness, felt no desire for the destruction of the Church of England, nor any wish to deprive her of the revenues with which she had been for ages endowed, or the *status* she had hitherto enjoyed. But as there is an exception to almost every rule, so it happened on this occasion, that there was a man, even in the ranks of the Methodist ministry, who, in these respects, proved a most remarkable exception to the general character of his brethren, and of the Connexion at large.

The Rev.
J. R. Stephens, his
ability and
early career.

This was the Rev. Joseph Rayner Stephens, son of the able and excellent minister who was president of the Conference in 1827, and brother of the editor of the "Christian Advocate," whose conduct in the management of that periodical had been condemned and deplored by the last Conference. Unhappily for himself and the peace of the Connexion, instead of adhering to the moderate and Methodist principles of his excellent father, he adopted the wild opinions and strong prejudices of his brother, the influence of which had made the "Christian Advocate" notorious. He was a minister of ability, energy, and eloquence. Received on trial, and appointed to Beverley, in 1825; at the following Conference he was sent as a missionary to Stockholm, where he remained four years. In 1830, he was stationed at Cheltenham; the following year he was at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and at the Conference of 1832 was sent to Ashton-under-Lyne. He had entered upon his second year in that sphere of labour when the circumstances took place which we have to relate, and which involved

him in difficulty and trouble, and the Connexion in great and protracted embarrassment and suffering.

Under the exciting political influences already referred to, it was arranged to form a Society in Ashton-under-Lyne for effecting an entire separation of the Church of England from the State, and to abolish all compulsory payments for religious purposes throughout Great Britain, Ireland, and the British Colonies. Stephens was invited to take part in a public meeting called for the purpose of originating and inaugurating this Society. The meeting was held January twenty-seventh, 1834; and Stephens, although suffering from indisposition, delivered a long and able speech in support of the object for which the meeting was convened. He was fully aware that he was taking a step inconsistent with his position as a Wesleyan minister. He told the deputation who waited on him with an invitation to attend the meeting, and repeated it in the opening paragraph of his speech, that he could not attend in the official character which he sustained towards a certain denomination of Christians; that the subject of dissent was one which had seldom, if ever, been mooted and discussed among them as a religious Body; but that, as an individual, having no connexion with the members of his own Church in reference to the subject, he was a liberty man.”*

Church Separation Society at Ashton-under-Lyne.

We think the distinction attempted in these sentences will not be regarded, by religious people generally, as satisfactory. Most persons of sober judgment will be of the opinion, that where a Methodist minister cannot go as a Methodist minister, it were better for him not to go at all. And if it be contended, that there are duties which such a man has to discharge as a citizen, altogether separate from

* “The Case of the Rev. J. R. Stephens, compiled from the ‘Christian Advocate.’”

those which devolve on him in his ministerial character, it will still be conceded, that these must not involve the sacrifice of any principle or practice to which he stands pledged as a minister. This was precisely the case with Stephens. He was well aware that in uniting with others in a demand for the alienation of all temporal support from the Established Church, he was acting contrary to the express injunctions of Wesley, and to the principles of the Conference from the beginning.

Mr. Stephens associates himself with the movement.

But the course which he pursued soon became more strange. While saying that he could not appear "in the character which he sustained towards a certain denomination of Christians," or, in other words, that he could not stand there as a Methodist minister, he produced a list of at least one hundred signatures, embracing almost all the local preachers and leaders, with other male members, of the Methodist Society in Ashton, who had requested him to offer their names to be appended to the memorial before the meeting. This, he said, had been done by these persons "without suggestion, or even knowledge, on his part;" but, having been requested to carry out their views, "he had neither the right nor the wish to decline this request." He therefore "proposed the insertion of the words, 'and of the Wesleyan Methodists,' into the preamble of the memorial, which, on their behalf as well as his own, he should have the honour to sign."

Stephens perceived that this action was altogether at variance with his appearance as a citizen, without any reference "to the official character which he sustained;" and he was therefore constrained to declare that it placed him before the meeting "in a somewhat altered position." Yet in this new position, as a Wesleyan minister, acting for himself, and representing one hundred local preachers,

leaders, and members, he proceeded to argue in favour of the proposed memorial. "Being himself a decided Dissenter, in the sense in which the word was then to be used, he concurred in the sentiments so clearly and ably avowed in that document. It was based on the great principles which associated all Dissenters. He disapproved of the patronage of religion, under any form, shape, or modification, by the secular power. This was the principle which ought most prominently to be put forward in every one of those memorials which were going up to government. It was only right that ministers should be aware of the extent to which this principle was held throughout the whole empire, and well-nigh throughout the whole civilized world. And they were untrue to themselves, they were unfaithful to their own consciences, they were hypocrites before men, and traitors to God, unless, on all proper occasions, and employing the means which Divine Providence put within their reach, they were free and bold, and determined to broach the doctrines and disseminate the principles which in their best judgment they entertained." In this manner he proceeded at considerable length, and closed his address with the following sentences : "The High Church cry, which in bygone years rallied the people round them, (the clergy of the Established Church,) had lost its charm. The injustice of their pretensions had been discovered, the unrighteous principle of their supremacy was exploded, they had lost the affections of the people, and forfeited the blind confidence with which they had so long been regarded. Their days, in short, were numbered, and ere long the very existence of the Established Church would be like a tale that was told, and remembered only for the moral evils which it had brought upon the country. Better, then, would it be for

the Church that she should yield up the unjust dominion which she now held, than that, driven successively from all her positions, and frittering away in an unholy warfare the reputation she still possessed, she should be ultimately stripped of her authority by the force of public indignation, and dwindle into a sect more petty and contemptible than the least of those upon which in the days of her pride she looked down with so much affected scorn."

It is not necessary to enlarge on the hasty recklessness of these statements and predictions; but the most casual observer will perceive that Methodism would abandon the position it had avowedly occupied from the beginning in respect to the Established Church, if it sanctioned such conduct in one of its ministers. But the action of Stephens did not terminate here. On the third of March, about five weeks after this speech had been delivered, another meeting was held in Ashton, when a Society was formally constituted, under the title of the "Church Separation Society for Ashton-under-Lyne and District." At that meeting Stephens moved the following resolution: "That the object of this Association shall be the employment of all lawful and Christian means, to obtain the immediate and total separation of the Church from the State, throughout the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland and the Colonies; so that all penal statutes affecting religious opinions, and all compulsory payments for religious purposes, shall for ever cease in his Majesty's dominions." By another resolution, passed at the same meeting, Stephens was appointed one of the corresponding secretaries of this Society.

And is appointed corresponding secretary of the Society.

The ardour and zeal with which he entered into this movement, led him to promote its objects not only by

diligent exertion, but also by the means and influence arising out of his official position. He attended other public meetings at Hyde, Oldham, and Staleybridge; and introduced petitions to Parliament, praying for the total separation of Church and State, into Methodist chapels, and from the pulpit requested the congregation to sign them.

This conduct, as might be expected, subjected him to disciplinary action. The chairman of the District, the Rev. Robert Newton, having received many complaints and applications on the subject from influential parties in Manchester, wrote to Mr. Stephens,* informing him that he had received complaints against him, on the ground of his conduct in respect of the Church Separation Society, and giving him official notice that he would be expected to answer them at the ensuing District Meeting.

Subjects
himself to
disciplinary
action.

On receiving this notice of trial, Stephens wrote to the chairman, requesting the name of his accuser, the particular charges to be made against him, and the manner in which he would have to account to his brethren for his

* "MY DEAR BROTHER,

"COMPLAINTS having been made to me that you have attended meetings in and out of your Circuit, where you have delivered speeches highly inimical to the Established Church, whereby you have implicated your brethren in the ministry, as well as the Connexion generally; and that you have accepted the office of 'corresponding secretary' to a Society or 'Union' alien from Methodism; it therefore becomes my duty to inform you, that you will be required to account to your brethren for your conduct in these instances at the District Meeting, which is appointed for Monday the twenty-eighth of April.

"The high regard I have long had for the principles and character of your good father, renders this act of official duty on my part doubly painful.

"I am yours faithfully,

"ROBERT NEWTON."

"Manchester, March 31st, 1834."

conduct. He further declared, that in the whole proceeding nothing was remoter from his thoughts than that he was acting in opposition to the constitution of Methodism; and expressed the most devout wishes that the deliberations of the District Meeting and of the Conference might be so divinely directed as to conduce to the utmost good of Methodism and the country at large. He also thanked Mr. Newton for his kind appreciation of the principles of his father, and expressed strong confidence that all who entertained those principles would unite in acquitting him of the charges brought against him. This letter was not answered in writing; but in a personal interview Mr. Newton gave the names of the preachers who would be ready to support the charges, and expressed his opinion on some important points respecting the manner in which the trial should be conducted.

Diligently
prepares for
his defence.

Stephens employed himself with great diligence and ability, during the interval before the District Meeting, in preparing for his defence. He wrote to the three preachers who had pledged themselves to sustain the charges before the District Meeting. He informs them that he has pleaded "not guilty" to the charges stated in the letter of the chairman of the District, and that, to save time at the District Meeting, he had agreed to sign the report of his speech at the Ashton meeting, as given in the "Times," as "meaning to abide by, and hold" himself "responsible for, the sentiments therein delivered; as he had also the rules of the Church Separation Society." He further states that the chairman had pledged himself that those who had lodged the complaints should be called to prove their allegations. He also wrote to those superintendents who had in their respective Circuits members of Society who were members of the Church Separation or of similar Societies,

giving them notice that at the District Meeting they would be asked how they had conducted themselves with regard to those persons, and whether they had warned them of the impropriety of their course, or had adopted any disciplinary measures respecting them. In these letters the names of the persons alluded to as members of such Societies were given.

About a week before the District Meeting, and after these communications had been made, the chairman of the District wrote another letter, in which the introduction of petitions into the chapels which Stephens, from the pulpit, recommended the people to sign, and the proposing to insert the words, "and the Wesleyan Methodists," into the Church Separation Memorial, "were added to the charges against him; and he was told that he would be asked at the meeting whether, in all these acts, he 'had the previous sanction of his superintendent.'" In reply, Stephens sent a very long letter, in which he bitterly complained of these new or additional charges being made against him at the eleventh hour, after all the matters had been adjusted for trial, and he had consented to stake his case on the "Times" report of his speech at Ashton. He also complained of the delay in bringing forward charges, although the preachers were known to have declared his impeachment to be certain. To the form and the lateness of these communications he made great objection. He wrote to his superintendent respecting the new aspect of the case presented by the chairman's second letter, and gave him notice of questions which would be put to him at the District Meeting.

The time for the meeting came, and the subject was introduced in regular order. Stephens was greatly disappointed, and, as he expressed it, astonished, at the

The trial at
the District
Meeting.

course which the meeting pursued. He fully expected that, while he admitted the facts, as alleged against him, he should be at liberty to canvass their culpability, on the ground that Wesley during his life, and the Conference since his death, had frequently employed language similar, as he alleged, to that which he had used in reference to the union between Church and State;—or, as he expressed it in one of his letters, that they were to “try the question itself, as well as the individual.”

The District Committee refused to pursue this course. They would not raise the question, whether it were Methodistically right for members of the Society to combine and agitate for the injury of the Established Church. This was held to be opposed to the principles and practice of Methodism from the beginning; and the application for any such inquiry was entirely rejected. A case was accordingly drawn up for the purpose of placing the subject fully under consideration.* The particulars as thus

* “THE CASE OF BROTHER J. R. STEPHENS.

“1. That Brother J. R. Stephens has attended four public meetings, held at Ashton-under-Lyne, Hyde, Oldham, and Staleybridge, one of the avowed objects of which meetings was to obtain the total separation of the Church and State, and that at these meetings he delivered speeches expressive of his approbation of that object.

“2. That at the Ashton meeting, the terms, ‘Wesleyan Methodists of Ashton-under-Lyne,’ were, on his motion, introduced into the preamble of a memorial complaining of several practical grievances of Dissenters.

“3. That he announced from the pulpit that a town’s petition, praying for a separation of Church and State, lay for signature in the vestry of the chapel.

“4. That he has accepted an appointment to the office of ‘corresponding secretary’ to a Society called ‘the Church Separation Society for Ashton-under-Lyne and the neighbouring District.’

“(The above facts were admitted by Brother Stephens.)

“5. That he has thus acted without consulting his Superintendent, and contrary to his example and expressed opinion.”—Octavo “Minutes,” vol. vii., p. 417.

set forth, with one not very important exception, were fully admitted by Stephens. His brethren had therefore to consider whether or not he had acted with consistency and propriety as a Methodist preacher. The official report states that the whole case was "solemnly and impartially considered." The "Christian Advocate," which throughout the whole of the proceedings gave the most zealous support to Stephens, declared that "Dr. Warren long and earnestly contended that the meeting would pursue a difficult and dangerous course, if it proceeded against Mr. Stephens by way of charges." If this were the case, as is very probable, the object evidently was to shield the accused from the most serious consequences of his fault. For we are told, that the Doctor urged the meeting "very impressively to drop the charges entirely, enter nothing of that kind on their Minutes, but proceed to inquire freely into their brother's conduct; and then, should the meeting think that he had done wrong, he might be censured from the chair, and be required for the future to abstain from what was considered so obnoxious to his brethren."

The District Committee, however, thought differently. They believed that a great violation of rule had been committed in the most public manner, and published widely throughout the land; that this had been done in a time of great public excitement; and that, consequently, it was due alike to the character of Methodism and to the world at large, that the result should not be confined to a reproof from the chair of the Manchester District Meeting; but that the Connexion and the public generally should know that this conduct was regarded not as a mere error or fault, but as a flagrant violation of Methodist propriety. Nor does it appear that Warren, whatever his wishes, or however kindly he was disposed to treat

The decision
of the Dis-
trict Com-
mittee.

Stephens, was able to justify to his brethren, or to his own mind, a persevering opposition to the proposed plan. A series of Resolutions,* drawn up on the allegations put

* "The whole case having been solemnly and impartially considered, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted by the meeting:—

"1. That in these proceedings Brother Stephens has flagrantly violated the peaceable and anti-sectarian spirit of Wesleyan Methodism, so strongly enjoined in the writings of our Founder, enforced by repeated acts of the Conference since his decease, and required as a necessary qualification of every Methodist preacher, particularly in that epitome of his pastoral duties contained in the 'Minutes' of 1820, and directed by a standing order of the Conference to be read in every Annual District Meeting, as solemnly binding on every minister in our Connexion.

"2. That the above-mentioned speeches of Brother Stephens are directly at variance with the general sentiments of Mr. Wesley and the Conference, and are distinguished by a spirit highly unbecoming a Wesleyan minister, and inconsistent with those sentiments of respect and affection towards the Church of England which our Connexion has from the beginning openly professed and honourably maintained.

"3. That, as far as his influence extends, Brother Stephens has committed the character of the Connexion upon a question involving its public credit, as well as its internal tranquillity; and that he has manifested a great want of deference to the recorded opinions of his fathers and brethren in the ministry, and a recklessness of consequences as to himself and others, by the very active and prominent part which he has taken in the aggressive proceedings adopted by the meetings before referred to.

"4. That he has endangered the peace, and acted prejudicially to the spirituality, of the Connexion, by giving occasion to the introduction amongst our people of unprofitable disputations on ecclesiastical politics; thus violating the directions of the last Conference in its 'Pastoral Address' to the Societies, which Brother Stephens, as well as every other Methodist preacher, was bound by his example at least to enforce. (See Minutes for 1838, p. 113.)

"5. That Brother Stephens, in accepting the office of corresponding secretary to the Ashton Church Separation Society, has acted contrary to his peculiar calling and solemn engagements as a Methodist preacher.

"6. That the culpability of these proceedings is aggravated by the fact, that they were pursued by Brother Stephens without consultation with his superintendent, and contrary to his example and expressed opinion.

forth in these charges, was carried unanimously. By this decision a public protest was given against Stephens's proceeding in this matter by the Wesleyan ministers of the District, and a public censure pronounced on his conduct in the neighbourhood where the offence was committed. Nor did the effect of the verdict terminate in these necessary results. It showed the church and the world, that the ministers of a most important and influential section of the Wesleyan community not only had no sympathy with the violent aggression made on the Established Church, but that they condemned such conduct when pursued by a Methodist preacher, and were determined not to allow such an one to remain in communion with them.

Mr. Stephens suspended until the Conference.

This procedure was hailed by the Wesleyan ministers and people generally, as a suitable and proper vindication of their principles and polity. But the avowed Dissenters and ultra-

"7. That Brother Stephens be authoritatively required to resign his office as secretary to the Church Separation Society, and to abstain, until the next session of Conference, from taking any part in the proceedings of that Society, or of any other society or meeting having a kindred object; and that, in the event of a violation of this injunction, he be forthwith suspended until the Conference, and that his superintendent give immediate notice to the chairman of the District, that the president may supply his place in the Ashton Circuit.

"The above resolutions having been read to Brother Stephens, he declared that on the finding of the second and third he could not acknowledge the authority of the meeting, and that he would not resign the office of corresponding secretary to the Church Separation Society of Ashton-under-Lyne.

"He is, therefore, now suspended from the exercise of his ministry until the next Conference.

"8. That Brother Stephens be required forthwith to remove from the Ashton-under-Lyne Circuit, and that the chairman be requested to write to the president for a supply.

(Signed)

"JOHN ANDERSON, *Secretary.*"

"*Manchester, April 30th, 1834.*"

Liberals, hotly engaged in a crusade against all Church establishments, were in an equal degree disappointed and incensed. They saw in this censure and suspension of Stephens a heavy blow and great discouragement to their favourite plans and hopes; and vented their wrath and ill-will on the members of the District Committee in no measured terms. The "Christian Advocate," impelled alike by the principles it had adopted, and the interest its editor felt in his brother, led the way in this general vituperation, and exerted its utmost influence to rouse the members of the Methodist Society throughout the country, and especially in the neighbourhood of Ashton, to discontent and rebellion. These efforts were unhappily too successful. The Methodists in the country generally were not, indeed, led into any extensive action; but a large amount of dissatisfaction with the ruling authorities in the Body was engendered, which, in the following years, greatly enhanced the power of the evils with which Methodism had to contend, and laid the Connexion open to attacks which perhaps had never else been made.

The violent agitation which followed.

In Ashton-under-Lyne, however, the party who had sympathized with Stephens, and become members of the Church Separation Society, with many others, were not disposed to see their favourite minister silenced, without making some effort, as they judged, in his behalf. It appears to have been at first intended for Stephens to occupy himself, at least occasionally, in other pulpits during the interval preceding the Conference. The superintendent of the Ashton Circuit inquired of the chairman of the District, on his behalf, whether Stephens were, by his suspension, prohibited preaching occasionally for other denominations. The answer was, "You will inform Mr. Stephens that *suspension* means what it says; and that, if he preach *anywhere*, during the period of his suspension,

he will be guilty of *contumacy*, and it will be interpreted as being a declaration, that he has left us." This may appear to some a harsh interpretation of the sentence; but it must be remembered that Robert Newton knew well who were likely to invite Stephens to preach, and what would be the results to Methodism if he were allowed to do so.

As Stephens wished his case to be considered by the Conference, he was obedient to the sentence of the District Committee, as interpreted by its Chairman. His friends, however, were not restrained by any such prudential considerations. They rushed into immediate and violent action, foolishly supposing that by such means they would obtain the reversal of the sentence passed on their friend, and his restoration to the position from which he had been removed. Two days after the decision of the District was announced, a meeting was held, said to have been numerously attended by the Wesleyan Methodists of Ashton, Staleybridge, Hyde, Hooley Hill, and other places in the neighbourhood, in which resolutions were passed, strongly protesting against the sentence on Stephens, expressing great indignation, and a determination to withhold "all supplies" from Methodist institutions, "until that sentence be revoked." The meeting then passed a vote of confidence in the religious integrity and consistency of the Rev. J. R. Stephens, requesting him to remain with them, "and continue, as heretofore, to discharge his ministerial labours." A copy of the resolutions, and of a protest founded on them, was ordered to be sent to the president of the Conference.

The day after this meeting, the committee of the Church Separation Society for Ashton-under-Lyne met, and passed resolutions expressing the "utmost regret and astonishment" at the manner in which Stephens had been treated; stating that they had always regarded the Meth-

odists as practical Dissenters ; condoling with the reverend sufferer, and rejoicing at the unanimity with which the great body of the Methodists in that neighbourhood adhered to those great principles, the advocacy of which had subjected their minister to so extraordinary a visitation.

Continued
violence of
the agita-
tion.

On the sixth of May, just a week after the suspension of Stephens, a meeting was held, which professed to be composed of Wesleyan Methodists of Ashton-under-Lyne, to take into consideration the suspension of the Rev. J. R. Stephens. The chair was taken by a local preacher : we have a report of the speeches as published at the time in a Manchester newspaper ; and it is saying little to add, that they were characterized by great violence and impropriety. From the beginning it was declared to be the fixed purpose of the speakers to "stop the supplies." One after another announced his determination to act on this principle, which the meeting was exhorted to adopt as their rule ; and the advice was received with acclamation. Not a penny more was to be given to Methodist objects until Stephens was restored. Some of the speakers, indeed, had wider views. They insisted on sending delegates to the Conference, to see how the money was expended. Another insisted on having Methodism reformed. Robert Newton and Jabez Bunting were vilified here, as on other occasions, by the most opprobrious epithets. The resolutions exceeded those already mentioned, and recommended more minute and extensive agitation. Papers were prepared and circulated extensively through the neighbourhood, with suitable headings to receive the names of "trustees and stewards," "the Classes separately, with the leader at the head of each Class," and "the pew or seat-holders ;" at the same time a regular plan was adopted for extending the agitation into other Circuits. One resolution requested, "that each

Society will respectfully address a letter immediately to Mr. Marsland and Mr. Hardy, (the other preachers on the Circuit,) stating that their public and private labours are no more required until Conference; and the Circuit stewards be warned to pay no more money until further orders."

The rapidity with which these divisive and mischievous measures spread, and the extent to which they were adopted, may be seen in a few facts. Under the heading, "Stoppage of Supplies," a meeting of trustees, local preachers, leaders, and private members was held at Birmingham on May the eighth. A public meeting for the same purpose took place at Oldham, on the sixteenth of the same month. The same day, a declaration for the same object was signed by Wesleyan office-bearers at Perth; and another, by official persons in the Sheerness Circuit, on the twenty-second.

The sudden rise and rapid spread of such an agitation as this clearly indicated an unhealthy religious state of the Connexion. For, however much Stephens might have been loved and respected for his talents and virtues, or whatever might have been the approval of his principles, it seems impossible for religious men to plunge at once into such a state of feeling, and to adopt such intemperate language and action as the proceedings of these several meetings exhibit. But one feature of the case stands out with so much prominence, that it merits special notice. The war-cry of this agitation was, "Stop the supplies;" the import of the phrase being, that the people were to withhold the means of subsistence from their ministers, until they abandoned the position they had taken, and were coerced into submissive obedience to the will of the multitude.

A purpose like this is evidently opposed to all rational liberty, honesty, truth, and religion. What tyranny can equal the attempt to compel a man to act in direct oppo-

Proposed
"stoppage
of supplies."
Unrighteous
character of
the object.

sition to his honest judgment and conscientious opinions? What cruelty can exceed the endeavour to force men to this wretched alternative, by depriving not only them, but their wives and children, of the means of subsistence? Then, supposing such an attempt successful, and the end fully secured, what is the issue? A religious community, with ministers acting in direct opposition to their convictions, and teaching in violation of their sentiments! Can this promote honesty or truth? A moment's calm reflection is sufficient to convince any considerate mind that the purpose itself, and the means of enforcing it, are opposed to all righteousness. It is carnal, earthly, political, and never ought to be named in a voluntary *religious* society.

Unhappy results on the Ashton Circuit.

The effect of this unhallowed conduct on the Ashton Circuit was most injurious. Several persons holding office conducted themselves so violently, that they were immediately expelled; although, in general, discipline was delayed, in hope that time and reflection would lead to more correct views and consequent penitence. But these hopes were generally disappointed. At the June visitation many members, and in some instances whole Classes, refused to contribute in the usual way at the renewal of tickets, and thus deprived themselves of their membership. So extensively did this evil influence operate, that about eight hundred members in that Circuit alone were separated from the Connexion; the number of members, which before this outbreak was one thousand one hundred and fifty, being reduced to about three hundred and fifty.

Proceedings on the case in the Conference.

Thus matters went on until the Conference,* where the whole subject was brought under consideration. The Rev. Robert Newton, as chairman of the Manchester District,

* The general proceedings of this Conference will be given in a future chapter; attention is here confined to the case of Mr. Stephens.

gave a narrative of the case, and read the decision of the District Meeting ; adding, that the subject was pressed on him by some of the most wise and influential Wesleyans of Manchester, who felt themselves so humbled, and regarded Methodism itself as so extensively compromised, by the conduct of Mr. Stephens, in his rash and zealous support of the Church Separation Society, that there was no alternative but to discuss the whole case.

Stephens made a long and eloquent speech in his defence, in which he urged, with great acuteness and power, many arguments against the decision of the District Meeting ; labouring to show that the Society with which he had connected himself was not alien from Methodism in such a sense as to deserve condemnation ; and that his conduct had compromised neither Methodism nor his brethren.

Mr. Bunting took a broad and masterly view of the case, in a long and convincing address, maintaining that, as Brother Stephens would be restored to his work in the ministry on his withdrawal from the Church Separation Society, no injury was inflicted on him, nor was he dealt with harshly ; and that this withdrawal was essential to the character of the Wesleyan Body in general, and of the ministry in particular. He then submitted several resolutions,* proposing to confirm and perpetuate the decisions of the Manchester District Meeting.

George Marsden seconded the resolutions, and Joseph Entwisle, Senior, spoke in support of them. Dr. Warren thought Stephens had taken a wrong course ; that Wesleyan Methodists should be neutral between the Church and the Dissenters. We should gain nothing, and lose a great deal, by deserting our middle position. James Bromley declared that he could not vote for the reso-

* Appendix G,—Case of Stephens. ("Octavo Minutes," 1834-41.)

lutions ; he blamed the conduct of the District Meeting, and moved, as an amendment :—" 1. That the suspension of Brother Stephens be removed. 2. That our business is to save souls. 3. That a committee be appointed to advise with Brother J. R. Stephens." Zechariah Taft seconded the amendment. James B. Holroyd made some observations on the momentous situation of Methodism. The venerable Henry Moore warned the Conference to beware of men with whims : some had the whim of conscience, some the whim of honour,—“by men called honour, but by angels pride.” He said the District Meeting had no right to suspend Stephens. Richard Reece, in explanation, thought Moore mistaken. Theophilus Lessey believed it not right to tender a silent vote, and assigned reasons for the one he was about to give. He thought the preachers should be more united ; they must submit to the decision of the District Meeting. Moore observed, in reply, that judges should not employ rhetoric. William Atherton would prefer the Church to Dissent. John Waterhouse spoke in favour of the resolutions. Thomas Jackson delivered a long and able speech, in which he fully reviewed the relation of Methodism to the Church from the beginning, showing that the primary object of Wesley, and of the system which he originated, was the inculcation of spiritual religion and practical godliness ; that with steady aim, through evil report and good report, Wesley and his successors lived and laboured for this supremely ; and that, in the prosecution of this grand object, they had always evinced an inflexible regard for the institutions of the country, and especially for the best interests of the Established Church. Thomas Galland spoke favourably of the character of Mr. Stephens ; and, in a long and clever speech, gave reasons why he could not entirely agree with the resolutions.

Valentine Ward spoke of the power of District Meetings, and in favour of the resolutions. Joseph Beaumont said he was altogether a Methodist, and thought the District Meeting had done its duty, and that Stephens should have submitted. But, he added, Wesley's bearing towards the Church was like that of a rower in a boat; his face was always steadily fixed on the Church, but every stroke of his oars took him farther away from it. He objected to be tacked in any way to the Church of England. James Dixon thought that the Methodists were not consistent, in attempting to promote a separation of the Church from the State. Admitting that they had a legal right to do so, they certainly had not a moral right. John Scott saw every reason to condemn the conduct of Stephens. Our position toward the Church is one of friendly and respectful regard. After some others had spoken, Bunting replied with great ability; touching every important objection urged against his resolutions. Dr. Warren, he said, had been fighting with a windmill, in his fear that they were going to the Church. No one ever thought of that. Then, Mr. Bromley had argued as if the District Meeting, in suspending Stephens, had expelled him. There was no ground for that notion, unless Mr. Bromley could not divest his mind of the etymological meaning of the word which implies hanging. He was surprised at what had fallen from Mr. Moore, as there could not be a suspicion that District Meetings had not power to suspend a preacher. He thought Mr. Galland had departed in his speech from Wesley and from Methodism; and finished by reading his proposed resolutions. The president then submitted Bromley's amendment: the mover and two other preachers voted for it, and a forest of hands were raised in opposition. The resolutions were then put

The decision
of the Con-
ference.

seriatim. The first, respecting "the facts of the case," was carried unanimously. The second, approving "the general views of the case," was opposed by two or three. The third, referring to the "first decision" of the District, was carried unanimously. The other resolutions were passed with scarcely any opposition. The third, of the second series, had three or four hands held up against it; the others, fewer. As a whole, the measure received the approval of the Conference with marvellous unanimity.

Thus, after a laborious and careful investigation, this difficult, important, and painful case was decided, and the sense of the Conference ascertained. Stephens was then informed of the result, and had the decision of the Conference fully explained to him. He was told that, if prepared to give his brethren the required pledge, which did not refer to any peculiarities of opinion, but to his future conduct, he would be immediately restored to his ministerial position. Unable to give an immediate and decisive answer, he requested time for consideration, and the appointment of a committee to confer with him. Both requests were granted; and the proposed conference with the committee was held. The next day Stephens announced to the Conference that he could not, under the circumstances, give the required pledge, and therefore resigned his place in the Methodist Connexion. The Conference finally resolved to accept his resignation, and the formal entry was made in the Minutes: "Joseph R. Stephens has retired from our work."

Mr. Stephens retires
from the
Connexion.

Renewed
efforts to
promote
general
agitation.

The efforts of those who sympathized with Stephens, to harass and impede the Methodist preachers in their work, and to produce discord and division in the Societies, did not terminate when that minister left the Connexion. The "Christian Advocate" still sustained the cause of its

editor's brother, and rendered popular the principles for which he suffered. Soon after the Conference, a renewed attempt was made to get up a general agitation in favour of Stephens and his cause. It was proposed to hold a great meeting in Manchester, to which the different places throughout the Connexion were urged to send delegates.

This purpose was carried into effect, but on a small scale. The meeting was held on Wednesday, September twenty-fourth, 1834, in a chapel belonging to the Particular Baptists, in George Street, Manchester. It is said to have been thinly attended, and was not generally considered very successful. Its proceedings, judging from the report published three days afterward in the "Manchester Times," exhibited neither unity of sentiment, nor energy of spirit; while they were lamentably deficient in Christian charity and sound discretion. It was not thought prudent to announce the names of the delegates; but the places from which delegates professed to come were Ashton, Birmingham, Glossop, Halifax, Launceston, Macclesfield, Oldham, Stockport, Staleybridge, and Whitehaven. The assembly could come to no decision as to whether they would recommend seceding or expelled members to form a distinct religious body, or to unite themselves to other existing denominations. The report pithily observes, "They all agreed in condemning the conduct of the Conference." However they might differ on other matters, on this they were all one.

The meeting, having proceeded thus far, adjourned for a short time. On re-assembling, Stephens delivered a long address, in which he fought over again his battle with the Conference in his own way; and proved, to his own satisfaction, and that of most of his hearers, that the Conference was quite wrong, and that he was not only right,

but that the views he entertained were sanctioned by "eternal and immutable truth." At the close of his address, the meeting adjourned until nine o'clock the following morning; when a series of resolutions was adopted containing a strong protest against the conduct of the Conference; an earnest recommendation to the Methodist people "to free themselves;" and, in addition to various other suggestions, the appointment of a general committee for working out a salutary reform in the Wesleyan Connexion. With the recognition of this agency and its objects, we close our account of Mr. Stephens's case: his future career, as it is no part of Methodist history, does not claim any further record on our pages.

Results of
this disciplinary
action.

The course taken by the Conference in this remarkable disciplinary action, however, demands farther and very serious consideration. It had an important bearing on the relation of the Methodist Connexion to the National Church, and to the political parties of the country, as well as on its own internal government and principles of action.

The firm stand made by the Conference, to prevent Wesleyans, as such, joining in an aggression on the Established Church, merits particular attention. The witty remark of Dr. Beaumont, that Wesley's relation to the Church was like that of a rower in a boat, who, while he kept his face steadily towards the object, was removed farther from it by every stroke of his oars, was undoubtedly true. But this did not arise from any insincerity or vacillation in the Founder of Methodism, but out of circumstances beyond his control. Wesley truly and honestly desired to remain in strict union with the Church, and to keep his people in the same mind and position. But this was not the first grand object for which he lived and

laboured. A higher aim filled his soul, a nobler desire was the ruling principle of his life :—it was to save souls, and to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land.

While he was permitted to minister in the churches, these objects harmonized ; but, no sooner was he driven out into the “highways and hedges,” to call sinners to repentance, and obliged to build separate places of worship, than the humorous picture of Dr. Beaumont was realized. Then, although his partiality remained unchanged, every success in the evangelization of the people, every effort to build them up in the true faith of the Gospel, every agency he employed for this purpose, all tended, in spite of his efforts, to withdraw the people from the National Establishment. Still, he steadily checked any tendency to Dissent. He uniformly adhered to the Church, and advised his people to follow his example. But he persevered with even more ardour and zeal in his efforts to promote the conversion of men, and their advancement in the divine life. The order in which these great desires held a place in his judgment, and their relative influence on his life and action, are heard unmistakeably in his forcible observation on a memorable occasion : “Church, or no Church, we must save souls.”

This tendency to separation from the Church, however, was not a matter of choice, but of necessity. It arose not out of any change in the predilections and desires of Wesley, but from the nature of things. And it is to the honour of the immediate successors of the Founder of Methodism, that they copied his spirit, and followed his example. They would not, although abused by intolerant Churchmen, and persecuted by clerical magistrates, place the Connexion in a position hostile to the National Church. Nor would they, on the other hand, refuse their people

essential means of grace, in deference to the claims of the Establishment. When the Societies desired the sacraments in their own places of worship, from the hands of their own ministers, the preachers were not forward to comply; but when the demand evinced the existence of a religious necessity, they gave way, true to the Wesleyan maxim, "We must save souls."

The effect of this disciplinary action on the relation of Methodism to the Church.

In those circumstances, it would have been extremely inconsistent in the Conference, to allow any of their brethren, in the avowed character of Wesleyan ministers, to join in a popular clamour for taking from the Established Church either its *status* or its property. The Conference felt this, and did their duty. But, in so acting, who can tell the amount of odium to which Methodism was subjected? Let any one ponder the public prints of the period, or consult ministers who were then engaged in the sacred office, and he will soon learn that the honest and consistent alternative, which the Conference voluntarily adopted, exposed the Connexion to a fiery ordeal of no ordinary extent or degree. We will not, however, dwell on what was lost or suffered in consequence of this course having been taken: if, as we believe, that course was a duty, then its consequences ought to be regarded as a religious necessity.

But, with a distinct recollection of the manner in which the Wesleyan Connexion has since then been spoken of and treated by those who have taken upon themselves to speak and act in the name of the Church of England, we may ask what effect this action of the Wesleyan Conference had upon the National Establishment at that crisis. We will not say that it saved her; but leave the conclusion to be drawn from the manner in which the highest ecclesiastical authorities regarded the friendly bearing of Methodism toward the Church at that time. In order to form any

proper estimate of the violence which political Dissenters then displayed towards the Establishment, it is only necessary to observe that an agitation for its separation from the State was not only intense in its energy and general in its extent, but that it had so far affected the national mind, that a Member of Parliament actually submitted a resolution to the House of Commons, affirming the propriety of relieving the bishops from attendance in the House of Peers.

This anti-Church feeling was indeed so strong, that the archbishop of Canterbury expressed his surprise at it, in Parliament, adding that it gave him "the deepest concern." He could hardly conjecture the cause of this alteration: their language (that of Dissenters) was certainly comparatively new. But while his grace of Canterbury heard the language of Dissenters with surprise and alarm, he saw in another direction grounds for congratulation and confidence. For he "knew one great class, who could in every degree be brought into competition with every dissenting body, both in respect to numbers, respectability, and everything that could be distinguished in a religious community, and who did not participate in their principles, opinions, and feelings; but, on the contrary, entertained a high sense of the benefits conferred on the whole community by the Established Church of England." So that in the opinion of the archbishop, however violent and powerful the whole mass of Dissenters might be in their hostility towards the Establishment, the friendly bearing of Wesleyan Methodists, who were equal in numbers and influence, was a sufficient counterpoise. When dignitaries of the Church are tempted to employ language towards Methodism such as has been sometimes used in recent years, it might preserve them from inconsistency, if they would call to mind such circumstances as those now mentioned.

Its influence
on the political
feeling
of the
country.

The conduct of the Wesleyan Conference in this instance had also a very salutary influence on the general political feeling of the country. No sober thinking observer could consider the state of political parties at the time, and for some years after the passing of the Reform Bill, without serious apprehension. The popular feeling had been so highly excited, and then its clamours crowned with success, that the will of the million had acquired a very unsafe ascendancy. In such circumstances, public attention was turned to abuses, pluralities, and the enormous wealth of certain ecclesiastical benefices and offices. But with some demands which were wise and reasonable, many others were incorporated, unjust, injurious, and revolutionary; and just as this feeling was acquiring force, and becoming general, the case of Mr. Stephens occurred: the disciplinary action of the District Meeting and of the Conference followed. An inevitable result of this action was to call the serious attention of the Wesleyan ministers and intelligent laymen to the subject. Passing events and current opinions were gravely and religiously considered. The decisions of the highest courts of Wesleyan polity were made universally known, and exercised a salutary influence. In addition to this influence, direct teaching was added. The following is an extract from the Address sent by the Conference of 1834 to the several Societies: "We have more than once reminded you that we live in times of great political excitement. Suffer us to renew the word of exhortation on this subject also. For the civil rights and privileges which we enjoy in this favoured land, we cannot be too thankful. Pray, brethren, pray much for our beloved country. Pray for the King, and all that are in authority, that we may live a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. Whatever rights you possess, exercise them as Christian

professors; both as to temper, expression, and object. Carefully avoid political contention and strife. Few engage in such disputations without losing sight, at least for a time, of the solemn injunction, 'Let all bitterness, and wrath, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you.' Whether in the prosecution of your temporal calling, or the exercise of your political rights, aim at possessing and manifesting the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit. Labour to preserve an unruffled mental tranquillity, and to maintain that habitual recollection of spirit, which is so eminently favourable to communion with the Father, and His Son Jesus Christ." *

Advices, given in such circumstances, and reiterated to every Society from the pulpit, must have had an important effect; and when it is considered how largely the Methodists are mixed up with the middle and labouring classes, the extent to which these religious influences gave a healthy check to political excitement, and promoted the cause of rational liberty and public order, can scarcely be conceived.

We should be unfaithful to our duty, if we passed from the subject without some reference to the effect which this disciplinary action, and its collateral circumstances, had upon the governing powers of Methodism itself, and on the Wesleyan ministry in general.

Its effect on
the Wesley-
an ministry.

No case had previously occurred in which a minister had been separated from the Body, not for any immorality, nor indeed for the breach of any positive Methodist rule, but rather for transgressing what may be called the *common law* of Methodism. The decision of the Conference, therefore, while it left every man's opinions untouched, and in no improper manner interfered with his right of private judg-

* "Annual Address," p. 8.

ment, as to his public action, showed him to be subject to the judgment of his brethren, as regarded the great principles of the Connexion, and their application to individual conduct; a circumstance which must have had its due effect on the minds of the preachers.

The government of Methodism was affected by the case of Stephens in another very important respect. One preacher of remarkable powers, when comparatively young, made his *début* in Conference by supporting the application of the Liverpool trustees for leave to erect an organ, and secured the object which he sought. After having evinced great ability, and in his ministerial career, in the general business of the Conference, he was the principal adviser of the President in all the difficulties of the Leeds secession. He continued to distinguish himself, so that in respect of matters with which he had no individual connexion, he was frequently referred to as the ruling spirit of Methodist government, and often spoken of as "the great Jabez." Occupying this position, he carefully observed the conduct of Stephens, the action of the District Meeting, and the appeal of the suspended minister to the Conference. The occasion was one of great, of vital importance. He applied his vast ability to the subject, mastered all its difficulties; and, regarding the case of the offender, the requirements of the Connexion, and its relations to the Church and the nation, he drew up resolutions adapted to meet the exigency of the case. These he introduced, explained, and defended before his brethren. The subjects involved were those on which a wide diversity of opinion obtained. In a very long and animated debate, the preachers expressed themselves with freedom and power; but the resolutions were adopted, without an alteration, and almost without opposition: for the fact that there were

three or four dissentients from two or three of them does not merit serious notice.

This, like other preceding successes, proved the eminent abilities with which the great Head of the Church had endowed this distinguished minister. But it is not for this purpose that we give this rapid and brief *résumé*. We rather wish to show the effects produced on Mr. Bunting's position, in relation to his brethren, by the discussion and decision on the case of Stephens. According to the theory of Methodism, as of the Christian church in its scriptural character, all ministers are equals. True, indeed, the former, like the latter, will admit of a *primus inter pares*; but the question arises, Was not the position now attained by this eminent minister something more than that of *first among brethren*? It is utterly absurd to suppose that the position which Mr. Bunting occupied was secured by any grasping ambition, or through servile adulation or submission on the part of his brethren. Neither of these causes could have produced this effect. His elevation unquestionably resulted from the employment, in absolute and universal devotion to the well-being of Methodism, of a most comprehensive and forcible intellect, coupled with great tenacity of purpose, remarkable tact, and a chaste and effective eloquence, consecrated in an eminent degree to the service of the Church, and fully recognised by the great majority of his ministerial brethren. But if the position and influence of this eminent minister appeared to arise out of the special endowments with which he was favoured, the distinction which it created, and the amount of influence and power with which it invested him, were, on that account, no less positive and real. And Mr. Bunting must have been much more than human, if this position did not expose him to peculiar temptations, and

require the controlling influence of special grace. His brethren must have been similarly raised above the frailties of our common nature, if they, in these circumstances, felt no tendency to envying and evil surmising. We feel bound to recognise these facts as they existed, while we mark the progress of Methodism as it passes in its various stages of public action under our review ; and the more especially as we regard the vast influence which Jabez Bunting exerted on the Wesleyan Connexion as the grand characteristic of modern Methodism.

CHAPTER II.

THE THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION ; DR. WARREN'S OPPOSITION AND SUSPENSION ; RISE AND PROGRESS OF THE AGITATION.

ANOTHER step was taken toward making some provision for the education of preachers on the list of reserve, by the Conference of 1833. A Committee was re-appointed to continue the efforts which had been some time in progress ; and it was instructed to "meet in London on Wednesday, October twenty-third next, to arrange a plan" for carrying this design into effect. This Committee met accordingly, and continued their sittings by various adjournments, until Wednesday, October thirtieth. They prepared an elaborate Report, which was afterward published under the title of "Proposals for the Formation of a Literary and Theological Institution, with a Design to promote the Improvement of the Junior Preachers in the Methodist Connexion." The "Proposals" were embodied in a series of resolutions submitted to the next Conference.

Further progress of efforts to provide education for junior preachers,

We have now to trace the further developement of this project until it was adopted, and carried into effect. In ordinary circumstances, this task would be easy and comparatively unimportant. But, in consequence of the varied, and even conflicting, accounts of almost every circumstance connected with it, and the terrible evils which it was made the occasion of inflicting upon the Connexion, it becomes peculiarly difficult and important. It will be necessary,

therefore, to be more minutely circumstantial than would otherwise be required.

The committee was composed of some of the most talented and respected members of the Conference;* and having, during the October sittings, unanimously agreed on the plan to be recommended to the Conference for the proposed Institution, they proceeded to nominate suitable persons to fill certain of the principal offices,—those of president, house-governor, theological tutor, and classical tutor.†

The committee, having agreed on the plan, recommend persons as officers.

The committee entered upon this question in the absence of Mr. Bunting, called away by some important trust business. While he was absent and, “without his knowledge, and also without any previous concert,”‡ it was suggested that he should be requested to allow himself to be nominated as president of the proposed institution. On his return, Mr. Bunting objected to the nomination of any officers, “as being not included in the legitimate subjects of discussion confided to them by the Conference.”§ This objection was, however, overruled by the unanimous solicitations of the committee, in which Dr. Warren “personally and actively concurred.”|| During this conversation, Mr. Entwisle, with characteristic simplicity and openness, said to Mr. Bunting, “It is quite useless for you to persist in

* The President, Mr. Treffry, the Secretary, Mr. Grindrod, Messrs. Newton, Bunting, Gaulter, Entwisle, Reece, Taylor, Dr. Warren, Naylor, Stanley, Lessey, T. Jackson, Beecham, Hannah, Galland, Alder, Waugh, Ward, and Walton.

† It does not appear that the office of house-governor was mooted in this committee, the recommendations having respect to the other three offices.

‡ CROWTHER’S “Defence of the Wesleyan Theological Institution,” &c., p. 31.

§ DR. WARREN’S “Remarks,” p. 7.

|| CROWTHER’S “Defence,” p. 31.

your objection; for we have settled this business before you came.”* In order to gain Mr. Bunting’s consent, it was agreed to recommend that such arrangement should be made, respecting the duties of the president of the Institution, as should be compatible with his present office of senior secretary at the Mission House. It was then proposed that he should name such persons as he might think proper for the tutorships; to which proposal he immediately gave a peremptory and decided negative.

The committee then proceeded to consider who should be recommended to Conference for the other offices. Thus far, according to all the accounts of these transactions,—and “their name is legion,”—all was harmony and unanimity: but here a sad divergence began. Some names were proposed and discussed, when Dr. Warren suggested Mr. Burdsall and Mr. Crowther as tutors. The rest of the committee thought some other ministers more suitable; and, ultimately, Messrs. Hannah, Galland, and Walton,† were recommended for the other offices, Dr. Warren alone dissenting. As to the immediate results of this action, we are left somewhat in doubt. The reports being so directly contradictory, it will be necessary to give both accounts, from authentic printed documents.

Dr. Warren stated,—and that not in the warmth of argument, or in an extemporaneous speech, but in a carefully prepared pamphlet published some months afterward,—that he regarded the nomination of officers by the committee as “a suspicious circumstance;” that the rejection of his nominees, and the recommendation of members of

Dr. Warren
dissents from
the other
members of
committee
on the sub-
ject of offi-
cers.

* CROWTHER’S “Defence,” p. 31.

† The committee had suggested that “the number of tutors will probably be three.”—“Proposals for the Formation of a Theological Institution,” &c., p. 39.

the committee to fill the other offices, together "with the astounding proposal, that Mr. Bunting should not only be the president of the Institution, but also a theological tutor, and at the same time retain the responsible and influential office of senior secretary of our foreign Missions, developed the sinister designs of the parties," and led him "at once *openly* to express to" Mr. Bunting himself, "that to such an extraordinary assumption of power I would never give my consent!"*

Mr. Valentine Ward's version differs from that of Dr. Warren.

The Rev. Valentine Ward, one of the members of this committee, in a farewell letter published before leaving England to take an important missionary appointment, gives the following account of Dr. Warren's conduct in committee: "Let us now listen for a few moments to the Doctor's complaints! And I ask in the first place, When, where, or about what did the Doctor begin to complain? No doubt, seeing that he was so grieved, had so many suspicions of great evils, and was so alarmed and amazed at the October meeting, he began his complaints then and there, and that these complaints were loud enough to be heard by all present. Not one word, gentle reader, no, not one whisper, during all the days we were together! I sat at his right hand, and neither saw nor heard the least symptom of alarm or dissatisfaction in him, from the beginning to the ending of the October meeting. It is true the different members of the committee were of various opinions on several points when we met, but we talked each other on most topics into one mind. Dr. Warren and another brother wished us to call the Institution a college! Yes, a college! but the rest of the committee said, No! Whether this alarmed or amazed him, he does not say: so much for pomp and display. He did, indeed, nominate two brethren

* DR. WARREN'S "Remarks," p. 8.

as tutors, after he had agreed to the appointment of Mr. Bunting as president and theological tutor; but no one seconded his nomination, not, I am sure, from any want of respect for those brethren, but because they thought others, on the whole, more suitable. And did the Doctor loudly complain?—Not a word. All the dissatisfaction he manifested in any way was not holding up his hand when every other hand was held up in favour of the other nomination! Now where is the Doctor's simplicity and godly sincerity? ”*

We leave the reader to form his own judgment on these conflicting accounts, with the single observation, that at the time he published his pamphlet, Warren had committed himself to divisive steps; and in order, as far as possible, to make his case uniform and consistent throughout, he might unconsciously give a colouring to some statements of fact; while Ward, having no personal interest in the matter, and being about to leave his native land, and not very likely to return, had no motive to lead him to make any exaggerated, much less false, statements.

Whatever doubt may rest on the measure of approval or opposition offered by Dr. Warren, as to the action of the committee, it is certain that, by their ninth resolution, passed on that occasion, it was resolved, “That the members of this committee who reside in London, with the following gentlemen,—Messrs. Haslope, Farmer, Buttress, Hunter, J. S. Elliot, Hoby, James Wild, P. Kruse, Jenkins, Pocock, and G. Bowes,—be respectfully requested to form a provisional committee, with power to add to their number, to make inquiries concerning the best methods of conducting educational establishments, to draw up a system of rules for the regulation of the proposed Institution, to inquire after suitable premises, and to examine minutely the esti-

* WARD'S “Farewell Letter,” p. 6.

mates of probable expense and income now produced ; that the present committee shall be adjourned till Thursday, the seventeenth of next July, when they shall assemble in London, at nine o'clock in the morning, to receive the Report of the Provisional Committee, and finally arrange the plan to be presented to the Conference ; that the president and secretary of the Conference be respectfully requested to invite such preachers, and other influential friends, from various parts of the kingdom, as they may think proper, to meet this committee for the purpose of a friendly conversation, with a view to explain the nature and advantages of the proposed plan, to receive their opinion and counsel respecting it, and to ascertain, before the meeting of the Conference, in what degree it is likely to obtain the pecuniary support of our Societies and congregations ; and that this latter meeting shall take place on Saturday, the twenty-sixth of next July, at nine o'clock in the morning." *

Dr. Warren objects to the publication of the Report, as unanimously adopted.

This resolution is one of those that were, without dispute, unanimously adopted by the meeting. To its being practically carried into effect, therefore, every member of the committee, so far as his influence extended, was personally pledged. The secretaries proceeded to arrange the plan, as unanimously agreed to by the committee, for final correction and publication ; and sent a MS. copy to each member, for his approbation, as conveying a correct report of their proceedings. On receiving his copy, Dr. Warren wrote to the secretary, protesting against the circulation of the report as the unanimous finding of the committee.† As the October

* "Proposals for the Formation," &c., p. 36.

† The following is the Doctor's letter :—

"MANCHESTER, *Feb. 22nd*, 1834.

"DEAR SIR,

"A MANUSCRIPT, detailing some of the deliberations of the late October committee, relative to the better education of the junior preachers, has just

meeting had unanimously approved the principle and plan of the proposed Institution, and had only differed, by the dissent of one individual in the simple question of persons to act as officers, it was thought desirable to publish the Report as having had the unanimous approval of the committee, reserving on a separate half-sheet, for future publication, with explanations, the recommendations from which Warren dissented. The following reply was, in due course, sent to the Doctor:—"Your letter has been laid before the London members of the committee, who met to decide on printing the Report. They wish me to say in reply,—First. That it appears to them proper that the resolutions contained in the appended half-sheet should not, for the present, be printed. Second. That it does not appear to them that any artifice was used in making this distinction; but that the reasons which led to it are very obvious. Third. That they think, to the other resolutions you cannot hesitate to give your assent, as they appear to be such as we were unanimous in approving. If, however, you think you cannot affix your name to them, and wish it to be withheld, the committee will, though unwillingly, leave it out of the printed copy." Dr. Warren replied, that this proposal was more objectionable than the prece^dpassed through my hands. As the document positively states that 'the committee were quite unanimous in their conclusions,' I feel myself bound in conscience to *protest* against being a party to such a declaration, notwithstanding the artifice by which the points of my dissent are omitted, and contained in an accompanying half-sheet, as 'additional proposals,' not now to be printed.

"Requesting that you will submit this communication to the parties concerned, previous to the manuscript being printed and circulated,

"I remain, dear Sir, yours respectfully,

"SAMUEL WARREN."

*"The Rev. D. Walton, one of the Secretaries
of the October Meeting."*

ing, and that he would not consent to have his name omitted.*

The report
published
notwith-
standing.

The committee adopted the course which Warren deprecated. They published the Report, stating "that they were unanimous in their conclusions ;" and appending his name, with those of the other members of the committee, to the document,—of course, omitting the recommendations from which Warren had virtually dissented by proposing an amendment. On this subject, Valentine Ward, one of the members present at the meeting, observed, "In my opinion, they would have done perfectly right in publishing the proposals, with the conclusions, as having passed unanimously ; as no hand was held up, or protest uttered, at the meeting in October, against any one of them."† This fact might, and it is presumed would, in a technical sense, have afforded a jus-

* "MANCHESTER, *March 15th*, 1834.

"DEAR SIR,

"THE expedient suggested by the third resolution in your letter of the twelfth inst., in order to report the unanimity of the October committee, appears to me more objectionable than even that on which I have already animadverted. It does not appear to me that the committee appointed by the Conference has authority to omit the name of one of its constituted members, to effect unanimity ; and, least of all, against the consent of that individual, which he certainly cannot give.

"That the 'proposals now to be printed' were as truly part of the deliberations of the committee, as those which are intended to be printed, no one present at the meeting can deny ; and had they been earlier brought into view, they would have materially influenced my judgment on those points in which I concurred. How, then, consistently 'with simplicity and godly sincerity,' can it be deliberately stated to the Connexion, that the committee were quite unanimous in their conclusions ?

"I remain, dear Sir, yours respectfully,

"SAMUEL WARREN."

"*The Rev. D. Walton.*"

† "Farewell Letter," p. 6.

tification for publishing all the resolutions as having passed unanimously, with the names of all the members; although it could scarcely be justified in the transactions of Christian ministers, under all the circumstances of the case. But there was no impropriety in publishing, with Dr. Warren's name, resolutions to which he had, in October, given his full and hearty assent, because five months afterwards he had altered his opinion. The statement given to the public was strictly true. The proposals were published as the unanimous conclusions of a meeting held in October, when the committee was confessedly of one mind. It would not have been true to say that they were not unanimous in October, because a difference of opinion had arisen in March.

Thus the case stood when the provisional committee, appointed by the ninth resolution of the October meeting, (already quoted,) assembled on the twenty-fourth of June. At this and subsequent meetings, the plan of the October committee, and the other subjects for which they had been called together, were very seriously considered; various modifications were proposed and discussed; the result was prepared for the ensuing meeting of the general committee. This meeting, as specified in the resolution already referred to, was held on the seventeenth of July. It included the lay members of the provisional committee, that they might, in due course, present and explain their report.

Meeting and labours of the provisional committee.

As Dr. Warren, in his letters to the secretary, of the twenty-second of February and the fifteenth of March, had protested against "the artifice" of his colleagues, and had indirectly charged them with acting inconsistently "with simplicity and godly sincerity," it might be expected that some rather unpleasant altercation would arise. As soon as the meeting was constituted, and prepared to proceed

with business, Mr. Bunting asked Dr. Warren, through the chairman, whether "he was still friendly to the principle of the Institution, or whether, since the October meetings, he had changed his opinions." The Doctor, for a considerable period, declined to give a distinct answer. He objected to the proposed plan, and was prepared to argue its impropriety. He was repeatedly reminded that this was not the question at issue, which was simply, Did he still approve the principle of an Institution, or had he altered his mind? During this conversation, an expression was used by Mr. Bunting, which was made to appear very important in the controversy which followed. While the meeting was endeavouring to ascertain whether the Doctor would confess to any change of sentiment on the desirability of having any Institution, and he was most adroitly fencing, Bunting observed, "This is the most unprincipled opposition I ever knew; and I speak advisedly;" adding immediately, "Observe, I do not mean bad principle, but without principle." To which Warren replied, "I expected no less from Mr. Bunting's well known candour." Still the unsatisfactory conversation proceeded. Warren was asked, "Do you continue to approve the *principle* of the Institution?" to which he perseveringly replied, "I disapprove of the *plan*." At length, Lancelot Haslope observed, "After all that Dr. Warren has said, Mr. Chairman, I do not yet understand whether he has, or has not, changed his mind on the principle of the Institution." The Doctor replied, "In consequence of the disingenuous and interested conduct which has been practised, I have changed my opinion on the entire project." On which Bunting said, "We now know what we are about. Dr. Warren has a right to change his opinions, and so have we all. Only let us understand one another."

Dr. Warren
confesses to
having
changed his
mind.

Dr. Warren does not appear to have argued the case further in this meeting, or to have complained of any language applied to him. Indeed, as the special object of the committee, explicitly set forth in the minute by which it was appointed, was "to arrange a plan for the better education of the junior preachers," it was not fairly competent for him to do so, nor even to sit in the committee, if he had so changed his mind, as to feel persuaded that no plan whatever ought to be devised for this intended purpose.

The discussions, however, commended the object to the warm approval and hearty support of many influential laymen. The whole plan, with the modifications introduced into it, was approved and ordered to be presented to the ensuing Conference, which assembled in London, on Wednesday, July thirtieth; the Rev. Joseph Taylor being president, and the Rev. Robert Newton secretary.* On the following Tuesday William Leach moved "that the Conference should agree to the recommendation of the committee for the establishment of an Institution." The principle of the Institution was thus fully placed before the Conference as the subject of discussion; and was fairly spoken to by the mover, and by Barnard Slater, the seconder of the motion.

Final decision of the committee.

Meeting of the Conference. Introduction of the subject.

The following morning Warren submitted an amendment, when Robert Wood inquired, whether it were decorous for the Doctor to come forward in opposition to a recommendation to which he had previously consented. A short conversation ensued, which ended in the admission that Warren was at liberty to propose his amendment, and to address the Conference upon it.

Great irregularity of Dr. Warren's address on the occasion.

* The general business of the Conference will be detailed hereafter. We now confine ourselves to the case of the Institution and Dr. Warren.

He proceeded with his address, and was listened to with attention and interest, until it became obvious that his chief object was not to argue against the propriety or utility of an Institution; but to ground his opposition on a violent personal attack on Bunting, and on the committee, as uniting with him to carry out his alleged ambitious designs. When the preachers were fully convinced that this was the Doctor's object, they refused to sanction a proceeding so irregular and unjust; inasmuch as the person so bitterly assailed had no opportunity of defending himself. The Conference therefore gave unmistakeable evidence that they would not allow the speaker to proceed in a manner so justly offensive. Warren appealed to the president, who decided that such a course of remark could not be allowed. The Doctor resumed, and very shortly relapsed into the same strain of personal invective, and was again called to order; the president deciding that such a course could not be permitted. Yet, a third time, Warren resumed his personal remarks, as if resolved to force them on the Conference; but it was now evident that the preachers were determined to maintain the ordinary rules of propriety, and that the decisions of their president should be respected. Cries of "Order," and "Chair," resounded on all sides, and much confusion prevailed. At length, the Doctor, turning to the chair, said, "Mr. President, am I not to be heard?" "Dr. Warren," said the president, "you shall be heard, provided you confine yourself to the motion before the Conference, which goes to the principle of an Institution. I cannot sit here and listen to these personal attacks, grounded on what might have happened in a committee. If you have any objections against the persons recommended to fill certain offices, you can state them when that

question comes before the Conference. But you must now confine yourself to the motion that the recommendation of the Institution committee be agreed to." The Doctor then said, that as he had been refused the liberty of self-vindication, he should reserve to himself the right of doing it in the way he might judge proper. He then proceeded to argue against the establishment of an Institution, and was attentively and quietly heard to the end. Bromley seconded the amendment, and spoke in support of it. The debate continued through the greater part of the day. Burdsall, James Wood, Haswell, and others, supported the amendment; and Reece, Lord, Waugh, and many others, spoke in favour of the original motion. At length the Conference expressed a general wish to close the debate, and to come to a decision. There were general and loud calls for Bunting, who responded, by declaring that, as Dr. Warren's insinuations had been so grossly and personally insulting, he would not speak to the question before the Conference. The debate was about to close, when Messrs. Everett and Beaumont rose together for the purpose of speaking in favour of the amendment. As they did not address the Conference, and much stress was afterward laid on that fact, it is necessary to state the order in which the debate was conducted, and the arrangement under which it was concluded.

As is usual in discussions of this kind, the preachers who wished to speak sent up their names to the president, who placed them on a list in the order in which he received them, and called on the ministers in the same order. Everett and Beaumont, whose names had not been sent to the president, and of course were not on the list, rose together toward the close of the debate, for the purpose of supporting Warren's amendment. The reason

Order restored. The progress and result of the debate.

of their not sending up their names was supposed to be that they wished to insure a final reply to all the speakers in favour of the "recommendations." The hour of adjournment had nearly arrived, the Conference was impatient for a decision, and calls for the vote became general. The president then said, he could not put the question, unless those preachers whose names stood on his list consented to waive their right to speak. Theophilus Lessey, one of them, said, that he had intended to speak in support of the "recommendations;" but he thought the subject had been sufficiently discussed, and if the brethren who intended to speak on the other side consented to forego their purpose, he would do so too. Others, whose names were on the list, and who intended to act like Lessey, expressed their approval of this course. Everett then observed, that he had intended to speak in support of the amendment, but would waive his right, if no one else spoke in favour of "the recommendations of the committee." This suggestion was adopted, and the debate closed by mutual agreement.

The president then put Warren's amendment, "That we pass on to the order of the day." Thirty-one ministers held up their hands in its favour. For the original motion a great number—it is believed, a very large majority of the Conference—voted; but as their number was not counted, it cannot be given. It was afterward alleged, that a great many preachers abstained from voting. But Richard Waddy, who was seated on the platform, and voted with the minority, stated, "that he had paid close attention to the vote when it was taken; and that he was bound in justice to say, that he believed there were very few of the preachers who had not voted one way or the other."

The recommendations of the committee for the formation of an Institution having been adopted,* the Conference proceeded to consider the suggestions for supplying the necessary officers. The appointment of Bunting, as president, was first mooted. To this proposal that minister himself most decidedly objected, feeling deeply, as well he might, the injurious charges and censures circulated by Warren and his friends. He very promptly and earnestly declared that, having been grossly insulted by such insinuations as the Doctor and *some* of his friends were capable of making, that he had sought power for bad purposes, he did say that he had not sought this office; that he had been solicited to accept it; and that he had consented, very reluctantly, that he should be included in the recommendation of officers; but that, since such unworthy motives had been attributed to him, he would not accept the office unless the preachers should insist on it, with the threat of expulsion if he did not consent. The expression of such a sentiment shows how deeply he had been wounded by the unjust treatment he had received. Yet it is painful to hear such a man driven to refer, in such terms, to "the threat of expulsion." Such an impossibility ought not to have been mentioned. Nor should the Conference have been put in the position in which it was placed by the use of such language. The Conference, however, pressed him to withdraw his objection; but he persisted in his refusal. At length George Cubitt formally moved:—"That the Conference *specially and earnestly* request Mr. Bunting to take the general superintendency of the Institution, by whatever name the office might be called." With the exception of Warren and his immediate associates,

Appoint-
ment of offi-
cers to the
Institution.

* Appendix H,—Recommendations of the Committee, &c.

there can be no doubt that this resolution would have been carried almost unanimously. Among the preachers generally there was but one opinion, that, if there was to be an Institution, its organization and general superintendence ought to be intrusted to Bunting. But the resolution was not pressed. Perceiving the earnest wish of the Conference, Bunting promised to take the subject into serious consideration, to consult the other ministers who might be appointed as officers, and in conjunction with them to give a reply.

There were but two other officers appointed at this time. Joseph Entwisle, who had twice filled the presidential chair, and was a pattern of godly simplicity, and deep religious experience, was appointed governor of the Institution House. He had the entire domestic charge of the establishment, and the pastoral care and superintendence of the resident students. John Hannah was appointed theological tutor. The president of the Institution was requested to render Hannah such assistance as he might be able to afford. This important office, for which his distinguished natural abilities and extensive acquirements, combined with great amiability of disposition, eminently fitted him, Dr. Hannah has worthily sustained to the present time. His clear views, copious diction, and, above all, the godly unction with which they are accompanied, render his addresses in the lecture-hall the means at once of instructing the intellect, and edifying the heart in the things of God. His long career of professional duty has fully justified the confidence reposed in him in the trying times to which our narrative refers.*

* We cannot refrain from stating, that few men have ever endeared themselves so much to the hearts of their pupils as Dr. Hannah. His "old students" regard him with the strongest affection. When he

In conjunction with these ministers, Bunting consented to take the oversight of the Institution. The name of his office was set down during the early sittings of the Conference as "visitor," and some copies of the "Stations" were struck off with this term employed. It was, however, afterward changed to the less ambiguous term "president." A committee was appointed, consisting of forty-eight persons, half being ministers, and the other half laymen of established reputation in different parts of the country; to whom was confided the important task of bringing this new and much disputed agency into full and efficient operation.

If, with the decisions of this Conference, we had to take final leave of the disputes respecting the Institution, it would be necessary to offer some observations on the extraordinary course taken by Dr. Warren. The heartiness with which he entered upon the consideration of the subject, and the impassioned energy with which he afterwards denounced the whole scheme, stand out in such strong contrast as will scarcely be explained to the satisfaction of any impartial mind by the reasons which he assigned. Unfortunately, however, such investigation would be premature. We have not yet fairly entered on the war of words which arose out of this business.

Soon after the Conference, the whole Methodist community was surprised by the publication of an octavo pamphlet of thirty-four pages, entitled, "Remarks on the Wesleyan Theological Institution for the Education of the Junior Preachers: together with the Substance of a Speech

The conduct of Dr. Warren rendered still more strange by the publication of a pamphlet.

completed the twenty-first year of his professorship, a number of them subscribed a considerable sum, in order to place in the dining-hall of the Didsbury Institution a beautiful memorial portrait of the now venerable Doctor.

delivered in the London Conference of 1834, by Samuel Warren, LL.D." The introductory paragraphs relate the circumstances which led the Doctor to discover, in the project to establish an Institution, an attempt to invest Bunting and his immediate friends with power and influence highly dangerous to the liberties of the preachers and people. The substance of his speech is given at length: the pamphlet closes with some brief observations, expressed in very strong language, denouncing the whole project as fatally injurious, and indirectly stating it to be such as a God of holiness cannot look on with approbation.

It was soon perceived that this publication must lead to disciplinary action. The fact of a minister appealing to the church and the world against the decision of his brethren in the ministry, when that decision had been formed after long and open debate in Conference, was incompatible with all established order and propriety. Means were therefore immediately taken to protect the interests of Methodism, and, as far as possible, to save Warren from the consequences of his own rashness and misconduct. Robert Newton, (chairman of the Manchester District, in which Warren was stationed,) and two other senior preachers, at the desire of several of their brethren, waited on the Doctor, to state their deep conviction of the immense amount of evil which his publication was likely to produce, and to request that he would, if possible, suppress its further circulation. His answer was, "I have not published the pamphlet without *deep thought*, and I can enter into no engagement to suppress it." When the chairman said, "Then, Doctor, you will compel us to proceedings which will be very painful to us;" he answered,

Meanstaken
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the disci-
pline which
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tion pro-
voked.

"I have not studied Methodism so long, as not to know all the bearings of what I have done; and I am fully aware that you must proceed in the usual way." He was requested not to be hasty in a matter so important to himself and to the Connexion at large, and it was determined that the interval from Saturday night to Monday morning should be allowed before his final answer was given. Accordingly, the chairman, called a *second* time on Dr. Warren, when he avowed his resolution still more strongly than before; and repeated, that "of course his brethren must proceed in his case in the usual way." Similar requests were afterwards presented with no better success.

Nor was the Doctor content to allow the publication of his pamphlet to form the only necessity for disciplinary action. He proceeded to steps which, had they not been attested by unquestionable evidence, would appear incredible. He was soon afterwards found not only approving, but promoting, measures which terminated in the dissolution of the Juvenile and Branch Missionary Societies of the First Manchester Circuit. At the September Quarterly Meeting, he justified and sanctioned the introduction of a letter, reflecting in no measured terms on the Conference in general, and on one of the members of that Conference in particular. The official statement goes on to say, "And especially he allowed and encouraged the introduction of a series of resolutions, which, besides involving a charge against the Conference, of having violated its own solemn pledge and compact with the people, embodied principles subversive in their tendency of everything *Wesleyan* in the government and discipline of Methodism. In short, his whole procedure was such as to admit no doubt of his being resolved, at all hazards, and by

Dr. Warren
persists in a
course which
renders dis-
cipline un-
avoidable.

all possible means, to rouse and agitate the whole Connexion ; and lamentable proof was speedily apparent, both in Manchester and elsewhere, that the pamphlet, and the proceedings immediately consequent on its appearance, were but too successfully accomplishing the object for which they were apparently intended." *

It was thus fully demonstrated that Methodism must be revolutionized, and irretrievably disorganized, or Warren must be subjected to prompt and decisive disciplinary action. The latter alternative was adopted ; and notice was duly served, requiring him to answer for his misconduct at a Special District Meeting, to be holden on the twenty-second of October.

This notice, however, in no degree checked the headlong course of the discontented and excited minister. A few days after he received it, he presided at a meeting, where he not only allowed a young man to pronounce a severe censure on the Missionary Committee, as having acted in a manner disgracefully unworthy of their trust, and to indulge in gross reflections on one member of that Committee in particular, without any rebuke, but showed manifest approbation of the proceeding. The conduct of Warren, in respect of an adjournment of the Quarterly Meeting of his Circuit, was of a similar character, and clearly showed that he was determined to use all the powers vested in him as a superintendent, to destroy the Wesleyan Methodist character of the Circuit, and render it an agent in promoting his divisive and agitating purposes.

The Special District Meeting assembled, according to appointment, on the twenty-second of October ; Joseph Taylor,

* "Statement of the Preachers of the Manchester District," p. 4.

president of the Conference, was in the chair.* George B. Macdonald, then of the Bristol South Circuit, being in Manchester, requested the privilege of being present. This request was granted, with the special assent of Warren, and on the usual condition, that he should take no part whatever in the business of the meeting. Dr. Warren then solicited similar indulgence for a personal friend of his, a preacher in full Connexion, who had been present at the last Conference. Without any inquiry into the name of this friend, this request was also granted, with the express stipulation, to which Warren assented, that this friend should be under precisely the same restriction as Macdonald. No sooner was this permission granted than the Doctor dispatched a note, previously written, by special messenger; and, in a few minutes, James Bromley, who had seconded Dr. Warren's amendment at the Conference, entered the meeting. It was afterwards ascertained, that Dr. Warren, feeling most anxious to have Bromley's aid, had so pressingly solicited him, that he came from York to Manchester for the purpose; although with very little hope of being admitted to the meeting. The application on behalf of Mr. Macdonald, therefore, came most opportunely for the Doctor's purpose, and smoothed the way for the admission of his friend. This circumstance, however, although apparently so favourable, proved most adverse to Warren.

Had no application been made for the admission of Mr. Macdonald, and had Dr. Warren asked the favour of being allowed the presence of a friend, it might

The Special District Meeting; its order and action.

* As Dr. Warren afterward took exception to the president's presence, it may be necessary to observe that he was authorized to comply with the request of the chairman of the District, by an old and well known law. (Octavo "Minutes," vol. i., p. 378.)

possibly have been conceded; and, if conceded, would have allowed Bromley admission as a friend of the accused. But the application having been based on the courtesy extended to Macdonald, Bromley came in as a stranger, subject to precisely the same restrictions as those imposed on Macdonald.

When Bromley entered the District Meeting, he did not act for a moment as one admitted by favour, and present by mere sufferance. He seated himself among the senior preachers, and began to take notes of the proceedings. This was, of course, objected to; and after some hesitation he desisted, and the business went on without interruption. The Minutes of the last Conference relating to the Institution were first read, then Warren's pamphlet; the charges* grounded on these documents were then stated, and the Doctor was asked whether he admitted their truth. "I cannot admit them *en masse*," he replied.† The president then ordered that

* The charges, as preferred by the Rev. John Anderson, and exhibited at the meeting, were as follows:—

"I. That Dr. Warren, by the publication of his pamphlet, entitled 'Remarks on the Wesleyan Theological Institution for the Improvement of the Junior Preachers,' has violated the essential principles of our Connexion.

"II. That the said pamphlet contains sundry incorrect statements and misrepresentations of facts, highly prejudicial to the general character of the Body.

"III. That the pamphlet contains also certain calumnious and unfounded reflections upon the character and proceedings of the Conference, and on the motives and conduct of individual preachers.

"IV. That the said pamphlet is distinguished by a spirit of resentment and uncharitableness, highly unbecoming the character of a Christian minister, and obviously tending to produce strife and division in our Societies."

† DR. WARREN'S "Account of the Proceedings of a Special District Meeting," &c., p. 6.

each charge be read separately. When the first charge was read, the president inquired, "Dr. Warren, do you admit this?" To which he replied, "I cannot answer that question, till the specific matters intended by the charge have been set forth." While some of the ministers were preparing to show that the publication of the pamphlet fully justified the allegation in the charge, it was observed that Bromley, by repeatedly whispering to Warren, was interrupting the business of the meeting, and the Doctor on some occasions would not reply to the question of the president, until he had consulted Bromley. To prevent a recurrence of these irregularities, it was proposed that Bromley should remove to another part of the room. He wished to change seats with Mr. Burt, which would place him by the side of Mr. Grindrod. But that minister objected, saying, "No, excuse me: I have my papers laid before me, I have no desire to change my companion." Bromley then retired to another part of the room, exclaiming, as he sat down, "This is most consummate cruelty."

The obvious impropriety of this observation, from the lips of a person admitted as an act of grace, and who was previously thought to have abused his privilege, made it the subject of immediate conversation. And as no apology was offered, that which might at first have been regarded as an inconsiderate act, was considered a wilful and obstinate insult, and the offender was requested to withdraw. During this conversation, Mr. Bromley more than once observed to those about him, "Nay, turn me out." This was regarded as "contemptuous and insulting behaviour;" and it was moved and seconded, that both the strangers should forthwith retire from the meeting. Warren immediately rose, and expressed in strong terms

his affection for the brethren present, and his entire confidence in their integrity; but he added, "What I am now about to say has not been written down: it is, nevertheless, the result of deep thought and mature deliberation. If Mr. Bromley is required to withdraw from the meeting, I declare to you I will not stand my trial, come what will."

Dr. Warren
persists in
refusing to
take his
trial.

The president and others very earnestly expostulated with him, and put many questions as to the grounds on which he could justify a withdrawal from the meeting; but these were either evaded or not answered. At length it was resolved to allow him two hours for re-consideration, and the communication of his final determination. At the expiration of that time, Warren sent a note,* re-asserting his determination in the strongest terms. Yet the District Meeting did not finally decide, but adjourned to the following day. On re-assembling the next morning, it was thought that more deliberate reflection might have wrought some change in the Doctor's views; and, as the meeting felt anxious to avoid extreme measures, they appointed a deputation to wait on him. The Rev. Messrs. Newton, M'Kitrick, Hanwell, and Crowther, called at his house, to inquire if any such alteration had taken place. The answer was, "I abide by the note I

* "OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER, *October 22nd, 1834.*

"DEAR SIR,

"AFTER mature deliberation, under existing circumstances, I have come to this final conclusion: that I do not think it my duty to attend any future session of the District Meeting called on my case. When you shall have come to your ultimate resolution, be pleased to send it to me in writing to my house.

"I am, dear Sir, yours most respectfully,

"SAMUEL WARREN."

"*The Rev. Joseph Taylor, President of the
Wesleyan Methodist Conference.*"

sent yesterday, to all intents and purposes. I believe that what my brethren do in this case, they will do in the fear of my God, and I shall submit myself to their decision. And if the *ultimatum* of the Conference should be that I must retire from the work of an itinerant preacher, I shall crave the privilege of being allowed to continue as a private member.”* This repeated and deliberate determination of Warren not to submit to trial, left the District Meeting no alternative but to suspend him from the exercise of his ministerial functions.† This was done in the mildest possible form, which afforded him an opportunity of reversing the decision, on submitting his case within a reasonable time to the judgment of his brethren. Failing this, he was suspended till the ensuing Conference. The decisive action of the day, however, and that which fully tested

Dr. Warren
is condition-
ally sus-
pended.

* “Statement,” p. 8.

† “The following resolutions were unanimously adopted:—

“1. That Dr. Warren, by his positive and repeated refusal to take his trial at this District Meeting, has left the meeting, however reluctant thus to proceed, no alternative consistent with the existing laws and usages of the Body, but that of declaring him to be suspended from his office as a travelling preacher; and he is hereby suspended accordingly.

“2. That, nevertheless, if within a month of the date of these resolutions, Dr. Warren shall signify to the chairman of the District his willingness to take his trial before a Special District Meeting, on the charges of which he has received regular and formal notice, the sentence of suspension shall be removed, on the assembling of that meeting, and he shall be allowed to have his trial, without any bar or disadvantage on account of his present refusal ‘to attend any future session of this District Meeting.’

“3. That, in case of Dr. Warren’s declining to give the required intimation to the chairman of the District within the period above specified, he shall thereupon be considered as being suspended until the next Conference.

“4. That by the president’s appointment, and the unanimous concurrence of the meeting, the chairman of the District be requested to undertake, for the present, the charge of the First Manchester Circuit, as superintendent of the same.”—“Statement,” p. 8.

Warren's promises of submission, was the last resolution, which placed Newton in charge of the First Manchester Circuit as superintendent. This made the suspension of Dr. Warren an accomplished fact. But decisive as this action of the District Meeting unquestionably was, it was neither new nor strange. It was in strict accordance with the statute law of the Connexion,* and in perfect harmony with its common law and universal practice. The power of District Meetings to exercise such authority, the Doctor had tacitly admitted for more than thirty years; and but a few months previously he had himself voted for the suspension of Stephens. These facts, together with his repeated avowals that he would submit to the decision of his brethren, were sufficient to justify the expectation that he would quietly retire from his position in the First Manchester Circuit, until the whole case could be submitted to the Conference. But on the following day, placards were circulated in Manchester, announcing that, in a few days, Dr. Warren would publish an account of "the unjust and unconstitutional proceedings of the Special District Meeting." The next day he sent a letter † to Mr. Newton, the chairman of the District,

Dr. Warren's
determined
contumacy.

* In the only case in which the Minutes of Conference suppose a preacher to refuse trial, it is ordered that, in that case, he shall be considered as being suspended until the next Conference.—Octavo "Minutes," vol. i., p. 324.

† "OLDHAM STREET, MANCHESTER, Oct. 25th, 1834.

"SIR,

"HAVING heard, from what I deem to be unquestionable authority, that you propose coming into my Circuit, with an intention to officiate in my place, *without my consent*, I take this opportunity to inform you that I shall consider any act of public duty performed by *you*, or by any of your deputies, in my Circuit, whether in the administration of God's holy word and ordinances, or by presiding in any official meetings, whether of the Societies or Circuit, a direct violation of the rights and privileges confided to

warning him, in the most extraordinary terms, against intruding himself into the Manchester First Circuit, and holding him responsible for its consequences. These facts were sufficient proofs that no submission was intended; and that, therefore, every step taken to assert the constitutional authority of the District Committee over a contumacious minister, should be very carefully and judiciously taken. Legal notices were served on Dr. Warren, by the trustees of Oldham Street chapel, forbidding his further use of its pulpit or premises. Similar notices were afterwards served in respect of other chapels.

This decisive action opened these chapels to Newton, but it did not lead Warren to any submission. He denounced Newton as a usurper; spoke of the desertion of his colleagues, Hanwell and Crowther, as exceedingly cruel; and persisted in obtruding his services wherever his partisans, among office-bearers or the people, could open a way for him. He preached at Blackburn the Sunday following his suspension, and the next Sabbath at Dudley. In some cases, the most disgraceful scenes resulted from these irregularities; Christian decency and order were frightfully outraged, and the personal safety of Newton and Crowther was sometimes seriously imperilled. Having secured access to the Tib Street Sunday school-room, Warren presided there at a weekly meeting (in opposition to the regular meeting at Oldham

The legitimate authority of Methodist law asserted and maintained.

me by the last Conference, and an unwarrantable intrusion into a Circuit not your own; to the fearful risk of disturbing the harmony, peace, and prosperity of so important a portion of Methodism as the Manchester First Circuit, and of creating confusion, anarchy, and division.

"I am, Sir, yours. &c.,

"SAMUEL WARREN."

"*To the Rev. Robert Newton, Chairman of the Manchester District.*"

Street) of as many leaders as would come ; and encouraged those who attended to pay their moneys at this opposition meeting. In these and various other ways he resisted the judgment passed on him, and appealed from his brethren to the people.

As the controversy, which for a while sustained such an unconstitutional and improper course, was chiefly conducted through the press, a fair exhibition of it would require an outline of the principal publications on both sides. Happily this is not necessary. We have not now to elicit the propriety or impropriety of the disciplinary action exercised toward Warren from documents of this kind. Not content to allow the real merits of the case to be ascertained from these sources, the Doctor referred the subject to the highest equitable jurisdiction in the country ; and we shall, in the next chapter, have to trace the origin, progress, and results of this strange procedure. It will be sufficient, therefore, here to notice very briefly the controversy which arose, and the revolutionary and extended agitation to which it led.

Contro-
versial pub-
lications
issued by
both parties.

On the first of November a handbill was published, under the signature of Henry Warren, (Dr. Warren's son,) alluding to the disappointment at the non-appearance of his father's promised account of the Special District Meeting, and stating that the articles in the "Manchester Times," "Guardian," and "The Christian Advocate," had, in some measure, rendered the immediate appearance of the pamphlet less urgent. The apology for delay was grounded on the excessive labour devolving on Dr. Warren in the sole management of his Circuit, he being deserted by his colleagues ! his extensive correspondence, and the reformation of the abuses of the Connexion, by which, unitedly, his exertions were severely taxed. A letter of similar

purport from Warren himself also appeared in the "Manchester Times" of November the seventh.

In consequence of the misrepresentations published in the Manchester papers, the preachers drew up a brief account of the Special District Meeting, setting forth the principal facts of the case.* This called forth an indignant reply from Bromley, denying that he had been guilty of contemptuous and insulting behaviour, and calling for reparation, on account of the publication of such injurious statements. A very temperate and judicious reply to this intemperate letter, under the signature of "A Lover of Order," was published by the Rev. John Bedford, then a very young minister on the Third Manchester Circuit. Another very sensible tract, on the same side, "A Voice from the People," appeared about the same time, from the pen of Mr. Lessey, druggist, Manchester. In this pamphlet the case of the District Meeting was calmly discussed, the allegations in favour of agitation were refuted, and the distinct assertion was made, that, after all that had taken place, it was intended to allow Warren the use of the preacher's house, and to pay him his salary until Conference, as though nothing had occurred. Additional light was also cast on passing circumstances by a very clever and useful tract, published anonymously, under the title of, "The Touchstone; or, Free Thoughts on the Propriety of Establishing a Wesleyan Theological Institution."

The opposition was also forward to speak and publish. "An Address to the Members and Friends of the Wesleyan Methodist Societies," from the pen of a watchmaker in the London Road, contained an earnest protest against the Institution and all the arguments by which it was

* It was signed Robert Newton, John Hanwell, and Jonathan Crowther.

Disgraceful
violence and
disorder pro-
moted by Dr.
Warren's ad-
herents.

supported. This tract was announced on the third of November. The following day, the Missionary Meeting at Bridgewater Street chapel was to be held, and the usual arrangements had been made for conducting it.* But no sooner was the Missionary Meeting opened, and a gentleman proposed to take the chair, than a (so-called) Captain Barlow, a local preacher, moved as an amendment, "That no Missionary Meetings be held in Manchester until after the next Conference ; and that a public meeting of the Methodists in Manchester and Salford be called, to take into consideration the awful state of the Methodist Society." Only a small number voted for the amendment, but the disorder created by the mover and seconder, and their partisans, broke up the meeting. Captain Barlow's account of this achievement was first printed in the "Manchester Times," and afterwards published in a tract, as, "Captain Barlow's Narrative of the blessed Battle fought, and the glorious Victory gained, at the Wesleyan Missionary Meeting, held in Bridgewater Street, Manchester, twenty-seventh of October, 1834 ;" a strange subject for a soldier's glorying ! To the misrepresentations of this tractate, Sergeant-major Riley and James Nesbit published able and efficient replies. In consequence of their factious opposition on this occasion, Captain Barlow and John Greenhalgh, the London Road watchmaker, were brought to trial, and expelled the Society. The Missionary Meeting, under arrangements adapted to the circumstances, was successfully held a few days afterwards.

At length, Warren's long-promised pamphlet appeared.

* From copies of letters afterwards published, it appears that a correspondence between the adherents of Dr. Warren in Manchester, and disaffected persons in distant Circuits, had taken place, by which the latter had been urged to some very decisive action for the purpose of carrying out their views.

It must have greatly disappointed his friends. We may safely refrain from characterizing it. The preachers of the Manchester District, as the only necessary antidote to its influence, published, in addition to their previous short account, a clear and complete statement of the proceedings of the Special District Meeting, giving a circumstantial account of the whole case, verifying the facts by their signatures; and adding an appendix, which contained documents in proof of their statements.

It was impossible that the Methodist Societies and congregations of Manchester could entertain such great differences of opinion and feeling as existed among them from the beginning of the disputes, and be acted on for many months by the continued publication of controversial matter, and yet remain in any real religious unity. Those who on principle adhered to constitutional Methodism, regarded the conduct of Warren and his adherents as criminally factious and schismatic; while the Doctor and his votaries abused their opponents as cruel persecutors, and as abettors and panderers to tyrants and tyranny. Even apparent unity could not be maintained between such elements, and the crisis to which matters were obviously tending, and daily expected by all, soon arrived in the organization of "the Grand Central Association." The germ of this Association first appeared in the three notable propositions, enunciated in the resolutions of Warren's Quarterly Meeting. After protesting that they wanted nothing new in the constitution of Methodism, they claimed, in violation of common sense, 1. To regard the Institution as a law binding on all the Societies, and therefore liable to be suspended for one year at the call of the Quarterly Meetings. 2. That the Conference should vote by ballot. 3. That the Conference be open to the laity; each preacher

"The Grand Central Association" formed as an engine for universal agitation.

to admit a lay friend by ticket, not to speak or vote, but to watch proceedings.

This "Association" was inaugurated at Manchester, November seventh, 1834, at a meeting professedly composed of trustees, leaders, local preachers, and stewards of the four Circuits. William Smith, of Reddish House, was in the chair. The discussions* issued in a plan, and proceedings, which, if successful, must have ruined Methodism. Liverpool followed in the same course, a branch of the Association being soon afterward established in that town. On this basis an active and extensive agitation of the Methodist Societies throughout the whole country was commenced; and that the object aimed at was not fully secured, was owing neither to scruples of conscience nor deficiency of zeal, in those who prosecuted this work of destruction.

* Appendix I,—Resolutions forming the basis of "the Grand Central Association."

CHAPTER III.

DR. WARREN'S APPEAL TO THE COURT OF CHANCERY, AND HIS EXPULSION.

IN the preceding chapter we have narrated a series of very extraordinary facts. We must now endeavour to educe from these facts the character of that motive power which produced them. We approach this investigation with the utmost tolerance consistent with fidelity to the great Head of the Church, and to that eternal truth which He has given for the assertion of its principles and the rule of its action. Here we have, indeed, no temptation to a lack of charity, or departure from truth. Our previous knowledge of Dr. Warren inspires nothing but respect, which any difference of opinion on questions of ecclesiastical polity, were it known that he did differ from us, would in no degree diminish. We may feel pleased with unity of sentiment, and rejoice in communion with those who are "of the same mind;" but, under any circumstances, we honour integrity of purpose and honesty of principle.

What was the character and object of Dr. Warren's agitation?

Under these convictions we will carefully review the series of events in Methodist history to which reference has been made, from the first sittings of the Institution Committee, October, 1833, until the inauguration of the Grand Central Association, November seventh, 1834. What, then, we ask, was the spirit that excited this frenzied action? What the principle for which all these deeps were moved? What the end for which all this conflict was waged? We confess

we know not. Look at the beginning of the struggle,—the nomination of officers in the Institution; see the end,—clamours for a radical change in the constitution of Methodism. If Samuel Warren had been president of the Institution, and Burdsall and Crowther tutors, how would that have obviated the necessity of vote by ballot in the Conference, insisted on when Bunting, Entwisle, and Hannah were put into office? Why, if it was right and proper for the Conference to sit alone with closed doors, when the candidates for the ministry were taken direct from their respective callings, did the presence of the laity become absolutely necessary to watch their proceedings, when the students were for a year or two instructed in theology? Supposing it quite true, that Warren had certainly detected ambitious purposes and designs in Bunting, and that these were even promoted by a score of preachers, would it not have been more Christian, more wise, and much more likely to be successful, to head a temperate and firm opposition *in the Conference*, than to trample on Methodist law, and promote revolution? On the assumption that the allegations are valid, the course pursued appears to be most unaccountable. What is the solution of the case?

Difficulty of
obtaining a
satisfactory
answer.

We have little expectation of eliciting a satisfactory answer. It was at first suggested, that Warren was himself looking to one of the offices of the Institution. So generally was this believed, and so strong the impression it made on the minds of the preachers, that Robert Newton, in the Conference of 1834, privately mentioned it to Warren himself. “I will tell you candidly, Dr. Warren,” said he, “what no other person has had the honesty to communicate to you, that all the brethren say, had you been proposed to fill one of the offices of the

Institution, we should never have heard of your opposition." * Warren himself also tells us that it was alleged at the time, that he had written to one of the preachers, requesting that interest might be used on his behalf, to get him appointed senior missionary secretary, in the event of Dr. Bunting being appointed president of the Institution. We should not have thought this report worth noticing, had it reached us through some zealous Conference partisan. But when mentioned by the Doctor himself, and denied by him in very peculiar terms, it makes some impression on our mind. "It will be easy for any one who doubts my word," says he to his friend, "to satisfy himself by requiring the production of the letter which I am said to have written. Mark, I mean *in my own* handwriting; and even that must be *identified* to be what it pretends." The italics are the Doctor's own, and the form of expression is such as would, we think, be scarcely used by any one who had *never written on the subject*.

If there was any truth in these reports, certainly much of the difficulty of the case would be removed. We should then see a reason for Warren's consenting to the appointment of Bunting as president of the Institution, on the supposition that he was to be one of his colleagues or his successor at the Mission House. This would account for the bitterness with which he inveighed against Bunting's "being smothered with offices." The disappointment of such hopes would also furnish a motive for Warren's associating with those who entertained no sentiment in common with himself, except a desire to inflict injury on Methodism; and also for his deserting them as he did, as soon as all that could be done in this way had been effected.

* DR. WARREN'S "Remarks," &c., p.

But the reflection which this solution would cast on a Christian minister of thirty years' standing in the Church of Christ, is so very serious, that we hesitate to endorse it, except on the most positive proofs. We admit that Warren, influenced by a laudable ambition, might have innocently aspired to either of these offices. But we can hardly believe that, because his brethren saw fit to prefer others, he could recklessly break away from all his religious associates, and plunge into the most desperate opposition to that cause which, for so large a portion of his life, he had served as the cause of God.

At the same time, looking at the events through the vista of a quarter of a century, with almost all the records, newspapers, pamphlets, documents, letters, and stirring facts of that terrible disruption under our eye, we freely confess that, if we reject the allegation that Dr. Warren was influenced by disappointed ambition, we are compelled to fall back upon a statement which, at the time, was regarded as scarcely more tolerable. If disappointed ambition were not the impelling principle of Dr. Warren's inveterate hostility to Methodism, then that hostility appears to have been eminently "*unprincipled*." We use the word "advisedly," and in the precise sense in which Dr. Bunting employed it. We can find no other common reason for his whole course of action. We do not mean that it arose from bad principle, that it was the result of unmixed vicious malignity; but that the rash and headlong career was pursued without the guidance of any uniform reason or pervading purpose; the monstrous product of violent, alternating, perhaps often conflicting, passions, circumstances, and agencies.

Further prosecution of the subject will, however, present it in an entirely new phase. All preceding delin-

quents or seceders, however great their cause of complaint, contented themselves with protesting against the treatment they had received, and sought relief in other associations. Warren was the first who determined to adopt a different course. He had alleged in his pamphlet on the District Meeting, that his suspension was "unconstitutional, and, consequently, altogether null and void!" Intimations were soon thrown out, that legal measures would be taken for restoring him to his position. These were not empty threats. Early in February an application was made in the vice-chancellor's court; two bills were filed; the first at the suit of Warren himself against the trustees of Oldham Street chapel; the second by four trustees of Oldham Road chapel and Dr. Warren against other trustees. The object of both bills was the restoration of the Doctor to the pulpits of these chapels as an accredited Wesleyan minister.

Dr. Warren
applies to
the vice-
chancellor's
court.

It was expected that the question would be argued on Monday, February the sixteenth, and counsel were present accordingly. But Sir William Horne, who appeared for the defendants, applied for a few days' delay, that his clients might be able to prepare their case. The vice-chancellor consented to defer the hearing until Wednesday, the twenty-fifth. That day the court was crowded; and, on the case being called, Sir Charles Wetherell, who appeared for Warren, complained that the other side had, on the preceding evening, filed some affidavits, which it was necessary for him to read, and probably to reply to. On this ground the hearing was delayed to the following Saturday. That day, the vice-chancellor's court was again crowded at an early hour. Numerous ladies, many Wesleyan ministers and leading laymen, as well as most of Warren's respectable friends, were present.

Sir C. Wetherell, Mr. Knight, now Lord Justice Knight Bruce, Mr. Kindersley, now vice-chancellor, and Mr. Parker, appeared for Dr. Warren; and Sir William Horne, Mr. Rolfe, now Lord Cranworth, and Mr. Piggott, for the defendants.

Sir Charles Wetherell, Dr. Warren's leading counsel, opened the pleadings, by stating that his client was an eminent Wesleyan minister, who had been wrongfully prevented from preaching in the pulpits to which he had been regularly appointed; and that the bill which he supported, was filed for the purpose of obtaining his restoration. After eulogizing Warren's character, and giving a partial version of the proceedings which led to his suspension, the learned counsel recited the several trusts on which the chapels were settled,—the bearing of the "Plan of Pacification" on the case,—the constitution of the Conference. He then gave a satirical account of the Manchester District Meeting, in which he severely condemned the exclusion of Bromley, and strongly animadverted on the position of Bunting. He closed a very able and earnest address, by denouncing the conduct of the Wesleyan authorities in Warren's case, and predicting his triumphant success in the present proceedings.

Mr. Knight followed, observing, that if Dr. Warren was not legally suspended, it must be admitted that he was entitled to the injunction now applied for. He then gave his notions of the rise and progress of Methodism,—the labours and success of Wesley,—and the changes introduced into the system after his death. He next endeavoured to prove that the provisions of the trust deed of Oldham Street Chapel required the presence of trustees, leaders, and stewards, in the District Meeting

by which Warren was tried. The conduct of that assembly toward Bromley was censured,—the disputes respecting the Institution were detailed, and the suspension of Warren was declared “a violation of everything that belonged to justice, humanity, or the kindly feelings of our nature.” This able address was fraught with terms far more violent than those usually employed by the most zealous legal advocates. Kindersley and Parker followed on the same side. The delivery of the speeches in favour of Warren occupied the whole day.

On Monday morning Sir William Horne rose to address the court in behalf of the defendants. He said that he had to exhibit the real facts of the case, and to clear it from the obscurity and misrepresentation in which it had been involved by the statements of counsel on the other side. He first assured the court that no part of the temporal emoluments of Dr. Warren, on which so much stress had been laid, had been withheld, notwithstanding his suspension. Having made some observations on the jurisdiction of the court in spiritual matters, and on the fact that Wesleyan Methodism requires obedience to the decisions of the Conference as a ruling principle; the learned counsel stated the real question at issue; namely, the authority of District Committees. Having thus opened his case, Sir William submitted a searching analysis of Warren’s conduct, pamphlet, and published speech, and placed the leading features of them all in strong contrast with the great principles of Christianity. He spoke of Warren’s advising the Methodists to “stop the supplies” from their ministers, for the purpose of coercing the Conference into submission, and clearly showed the unchristian character of the proceeding. He explained the effect which a judgment in favour of the plaintiff would

have on the Wesleyan Connexion. He also refuted the assertions respecting Bromley's removal from the District Meeting, and contended that it was the natural and inevitable result of his indiscretion. He concluded a very powerful and lucid address, by maintaining that the Conference had in distinct terms given the District Meeting power to depose and suspend its own chairman, and that it unquestionably had power to suspend any other minister,—that it had simply exercised its legitimate authority in this case, and that “the Court of Chancery had not the jurisdiction to interfere.”

Mr. Rolfe
and Mr. Pig-
gott follow
on the same
side.

Mr. Rolfe and Mr. Piggott followed on the same side; but their addresses were chiefly directed to the further development of the argument of Sir William Horne, and against the allegations urged by the counsel for the plaintiff.

Sir Charles
Wetherell's
reply.

On the morning of the third day, Sir Charles Wetherell rose to reply. He contended that the contest was not reduced to the narrow compass described by Sir W. Horne; that it was not simply a contest in which no other individual but Warren was interested; that the real question was, whether “a self-constituted and illegal forum of clerical members only has, or has not, a legal right to suspend a preacher who had been regularly, duly, and constitutionally appointed by the general Conference. It embraced the whole system, and no less than a million of souls were concerned in the issue. He dwelt on the disgrace which the suspension inflicted on Warren, and contended that a Methodist preacher had the same right to his pulpit as a minister of the Establishment had to his reading-desk. He argued at length against the presumption that, because Warren had sat in District Meetings when preachers had been suspended, therefore he must be

considered as an assenting party; and maintained that the provocation he had received rendered excusable the passages read from the pamphlet.

The vice-chancellor proceeded to give judgment immediately. He went carefully over the whole subject in a masterly manner, concluding that no sufficient case had been made out to justify the interference of the court. This document is so very important, that we give it at length in the Appendix, preceded by an extended summary of the pleadings.* The case was, indeed, of vital consequence to the Wesleyan Connexion; but our remarks on it must be delayed; for, on the Monday following, Warren caused official notice to be given of an appeal to the lord chancellor. By this announcement of further litigation, a deep impression was made on the Methodist Connexion throughout the country. The great anxiety which had pervaded all who desired the peace and permanency of Methodism, pending the proceedings in the vice-chancellor's court, had given place to profound gratitude and songs of praise. By the notice of appeal, the sense of security was again shaken; and all the harassing uncertainty of legal proceedings was renewed.

The vice-chancellor's judgment. Dr. Warren's application refused.

Dr. Warren gives official notice of appeal to the lord chancellor.

Happily, the issue of the case was not long delayed. It was spoken to on Saturday, March fourteenth, and fixed to be heard on the Wednesday following; Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst displaying evident concern to have a few days' delay before the hearing. On the trial it was very clear, from the knowledge which his lordship evinced of all the details of the subject, that the intermediate days had been diligently employed.

On Wednesday, March eighteenth, the lord chancellor's court was, at an early hour, crowded to excess by persons

* Appendix K,—The Pleadings and Vice-chancellor's Judgment.

Trial before
the lord
chancellor.
Plaintiff's
case.

of both sexes. For many years there had been no such concourse present. On taking his seat his lordship inquired, "Who begins?" to which Sir Charles Wetherell responded that he had the honour to appear for the plaintiff. It is not necessary to attempt a second *résumé* of his arguments, or of those of other counsel; we content ourselves with a few brief observations on the progress and issue of this hearing. Sir C. Wetherell went over the principal facts, as he had done in the court below; supporting his argument by a reference to the several trust deeds and other documents; the lord chancellor, as each of these was cited, asking for a copy, which he carefully perused. Sir Charles, having gone through the whole case, and answered the questions put by the lord chancellor, was followed by Mr. Knight, who very briefly addressed the court, and Mr. Kindersley, who, having in mind the grounds on which Dr. Warren was defeated in the court below, addressed himself chiefly to the question of jurisdiction, and contended that the judgment of the vice-chancellor was wrong, and that its effect, if maintained, would be ruinous to Methodism. Mr. Parker followed, and he was frequently addressed by the lord chancellor, who observed, that a preacher might infringe the general rules of the Society, and act in a manner very injurious, without coming under any of the four cases mentioned in the Articles of Pacification, unless those acts were considered immoral; and he asked, If all former rules were done away by the Plan of Pacification, how could such a person be tried? This observation, directed against the theory which was the staple of Warren's case, shows that his lordship had carefully studied the subject.

Sir William
Horne opens
the defence.

Sir William Horne then proceeded with his address for the defence, and went over the course of argument which

he had urged before the vice-chancellor, with increased minuteness and ability. His lordship frequently interposed his observations by questions in the course of the argument. The proceedings, to the close of Sir William Horne's address, had fully occupied Wednesday and Thursday. Before rising, the lord chancellor, aware that Mr. Rolfe would next address the court, requested him to turn his attention particularly to the meaning of the fifth clause of the Articles of Pacification, which had been so frequently referred to. On the opening of the court on Friday morning, Mr. Rolfe addressed himself especially to the Articles of Pacification, as he had been requested; and conducted a very lengthened argument, which, from the frequency with which his lordship interposed questions and remarks, assumed in the report almost the form of a conversation, and occupied the greater part of the day. In the course of this very able discourse, the character and object of Wesley, the rise of Methodism, its primitive design and earliest rules, the origin and rules of Conference,—indeed, the growth of the Connexion, and the beginning and development of its polity, were all fully canvassed. In this conversation Lord Chancellor Lyndhurst evinced extreme anxiety to master the whole case. His frequent interruptions showed the want of a perfect knowledge of the subject, and a strong desire to obtain it. This was evident to experienced hearers, as the instance adduced below will show.* But at last he comprehended the

Important arguments of Mr. Rolfe and Mr. Piggott.

* The lord chancellor's frequent interruptions of Mr. Rolfe produced a painful impression on the many Wesleyans in court. A barrister, perceiving deep concern on the countenance of a person near him, said, "Do you take an interest in this case?" He replied, "I do." "You are a Wesleyan, I presume?" "I am." "You must not think the chancellor is opposed to you because of these interruptions. He is slow in making up his mind; but he will come right at last, you need not fear."

difficulties of the case; and detected the sophistries which the ingenuity of counsel had imported, and was at length so much at home, when speaking of Methodist law, that when he pleasantly observed to Mr. Rolfe, "You will get me into full Connexion," all who heard him thought that, on the score of acquaintance with Methodist jurisprudence, there could be no objection whatever to his admission. Perhaps, indeed, the great principles of the Methodist economy were never more thoroughly, or more intelligently, debated, than in the conversations of this day.

Mr. Piggott followed Mr. Rolfe, and argued at considerable length, and with great energy, especially on the terms of the Articles of Pacification and the Trust Deeds, the latter of which he thought it most important to bring before the attention of the court; and he concluded by expressing his confidence that his lordship would come to the same conclusion as the vice-chancellor had come.

Sir C.
Wetherell's
ingenious
reply.

On the opening of the court on Saturday morning, Sir Charles Wetherell replied on the whole case. He contended that it was indelicate and unfair towards his client, that the president of the Conference should have been brought into the District Meeting appointed to try Warren. If this was not the studied object of the arrangement, it undoubtedly had this effect. He put it to the court, whether the propositions laid down by himself and his learned friends had been fairly answered. He then addressed himself to various topics which had been urged with great weight by the opposing counsel, in a most ingenious manner; and with unabated energy and confidence maintained that Warren was entitled to the relief for which he prayed. The lord chancellor said that he wished to read some affidavits which had been handed to him, and that he would give his

judgment when he next came into the court, which would be on the following Wednesday.

On that day, at the earliest possible period, the court was crowded to excess. The lord chancellor's judgment was a lucid exhibition of the whole case. Its great importance, as an authoritative exposition of Methodist law and usage, has led us to give it *in extenso*.* In all respects, it affirmed the judgment of the court below, and completely established the position which the Wesleyan authorities had taken. The utmost efforts of Warren and his friends were therefore frustrated.

The lord
chancellor's
judgment.
The appeal
dismissed.

But we should do great injustice to the importance of this case, were we to consider it a mere party struggle, issuing in a party triumph, however important that triumph might be. No! this contest on the side of the Wesleyan authorities was a struggle for existence. Had Warren succeeded in his efforts to be restored, under the authority of the Court of Chancery, to the superintendency of the First Manchester Circuit, the utmost confusion would have been introduced into every department of Methodism. Not only would the appointment of the Conference, by its highest functionary and legitimate representative, the District Committee, have been defeated and disgraced, but ruinous disorder would have been introduced into the system. No Methodist rule could have been maintained in a Circuit under a superintendent who had published such inflammatory libels, and had openly counselled the stopping of all supplies.

Vast import-
ance of this
decision.

And yet, when all the circumstances of the case are taken into account, it is wonderful that such a lamentable catastrophe was averted. Let the case be fairly considered. Methodism had been in operation a hundred years. Its

Great pro-
bability of a
different
result.

* Appendix L,—The Lord Chancellor's Judgment.

laws, usages, and arrangements were introduced as occasion required, and the circumstances of the Connexion rendered necessary. The Deed Poll was framed with the best legal aid Wesley could procure. But, after his death, further legislation became necessary, to enforce order, and maintain propriety of conduct. Hence the provisions of 1791, with respect to Districts and District Meetings, and the further enactments of 1792. These Minutes, as was observed at the trial, were not sketched by Chancery draughtsmen, or *Nisi Prius* lawyers, but by plain Methodist preachers. Then came the fears and claims of the laymen, and consequently the Articles of Pacification, giving to the laity protection from the appointment of preachers unsound in doctrine, or immoral in practice. These Articles were also formed by Methodist preachers in connexion with unprofessional Methodist laymen. And upon this basis arose a series of usages, extending over a period of more than thirty years; the administrators being always Methodist preachers, without legal education, or legal advice; acting very frequently in isolation from each other, and generally without concert or consultation.

In those circumstances would it have excited surprise, if the legal genius of Sir Charles Wetherell, or the forensic ingenuity and daring of Mr. Knight, assisted by other eminent lawyers, had found such discordance in these several laws and usages as would have compelled a Chancery judge to reject the authority of the whole, and to pronounce the administration of the system, as exhibited in its laws and practice, inharmonious and impracticable? It is to us cause of great astonishment that this was not the result. The whole case affords proof of the manifest providential supervision which regulated Methodist counsels, and directed Methodist operations. The facts before us prove

more than this. They establish the presumption, that the Methodist preachers who had the chief direction of Connexional affairs, were men of great integrity and real simplicity of purpose. Nothing but a steady adherence to these great principles could have saved them and the Connexion. They had neither the acquirements nor the means of concert necessary to give unity to selfish and indirect measures, or energy to plans and purposes formed without reference to some common, permanent, and upright principle.

It cannot be denied that the test to which the laws, institutions, and practice of Methodism were subjected, was unusually severe. Sir Lancelot Shadwell, the vice-chancellor, was an upright judge of more than ordinary ability, who gave himself fully to the consideration of the case; and who, as his able judgment clearly shows, had mastered all its difficulties; while Lord Lyndhurst's eminent acuteness and comprehensiveness of mind are sufficient proof that no latent error would escape detection, no concealed impropriety avoid condemnation. He also entered fully into the case; applied the vast resources of his judgment, tact, and experience to the subject; and what was the result? The justification and maintenance of Methodism in all its integrity! The Deed Poll was recognised as of established validity; the authority of the District Committees was vindicated; the subordination of the provisions of the Plan of Pacification concerning discipline to its legitimate and proper cases, as recognised in the general usage of the Connexion, was admitted to be correct. In a word, Methodism, as administered by the Conference, was, on this great occasion, invested with all the permanence and security of British law, and henceforth became one of the great religious institutions of the country. The decision of the

Severity of the test to which Methodist institutions were in this case exposed.

lord chancellor finally settled this important cause. A few days after his judgment was given, notice was received by the defendants' attorneys that the plaintiff did not intend to proceed farther in the cause. Thus terminated this strange litigation.

Termination
of legal con-
test. Con-
tinuance of
agitation.

But although the appeal of Warren and his friends to the civil jurisprudence of the country terminated with the decision of the lord chancellor, this in no respect put an end to the agitation and strife introduced into the Methodist Societies, and which the agitators continued to prosecute with unabated energy and zeal. The chancellor gave his judgment on Wednesday, March twenty-fifth. The same day a meeting was held in Carlisle, for the purpose of hearing the statements and addresses of a deputation from the "Grand Central Association" of Manchester and Liverpool Reformers. The meeting was represented to have been so fully in accord with the speakers, that means were taken to form branch Associations; and no doubt was "entertained that in a short time the whole of the Circuits would adopt the views, and support the efforts, of the parent Association."

So diligently and extensively had this agitation been conducted, that on Monday, April twenty-fifth, a grand meeting of delegates from various parts of the kingdom assembled at Manchester, to carry out the views previously put forth. We are told, one hundred and nine persons attended as delegates from forty-seven places. The names of the individuals and places are given; and it was said that letters instead of delegates were received from thirty-three other places. This meeting was continued by successive adjournments, from Monday morning to Thursday night. Too much importance cannot be attached to the deliberations and conclusions of this assembly. They

exhibit the grounds of hostility to Wesleyan administration, and define the concessions demanded as the only terms of future peace and concord.

After a long discussion, a series of propositions were agreed on.* The general and ruling principle of all was, the "right of interference on the part of the members of the church in the regulation of all its affairs." The whole arrangement, therefore, was essentially democratic; and the pastor was, in reality, no more than any other member of a meeting. It was, indeed, conceded that the superintendent preacher should be *ex officio* president of all meetings; but then it was enacted, that, in case he refused to submit to a meeting any resolution "regularly proposed," the meeting shall have authority to appoint another chairman. An appeal was allowed from the Leaders' or Local Preachers' Meeting to the Quarterly Meeting; but its decision was to be final, "without the interference of either District Meeting or Conference;" and, of course, as a necessary consequence, every Circuit would be independent. The decision of a Quarterly Meeting being final, the connexional principle could only exist in name. Lay delegation was to be introduced into District Meetings and Conference. The Theological Institution was to be abandoned forthwith; and Warren, and all others "who had been expelled, or had left the Connexion in consequence of the unjust and unconstitutional treatment they or their brethren had received, should be re-instated in the respective situations which they had previously occupied."

The principles and terms propounded by the agitators.

These principles being arranged, a series of resolutions was carried, referring mainly to the general business of the Association, and adjourning the further meeting of the delegates until the approaching session of Conference. The

* Appendix M,—Resolutions of the Grand Central Association.

Manchester and Liverpool central committee were requested to send out competent and judicious persons to different parts of the country, to lecture "on the objects of the Association;" and the Quarterly Meetings were urged to send addresses to the Conference, founded on the declaration of the London trustees, in so far as these were in accordance with the principles of the Association.

Their determined zeal and perseverance.

By the agency thus called into action, the agitation of the Connexion was carried on with great vigour. Wherever a few discontented persons could be induced to invite a deputation from the Grand Central, a lecturer, minister, and sometimes two or three individuals would attend, and advocate the revolutionary principles of the malcontents. In some places, indeed, the extent of disaffection was such as to render the importation of further aid unnecessary. At Camelford, the most influential laymen, and the Rev. John Averill, the junior preacher, threw themselves with great zeal into the work, and laboured with so much effect that almost all the members were swept away from the Connexion. Such cases of unfaithfulness were, however, rare; and on some occasions the torrent of aggression was boldly met, and successfully resisted. At Hanley, in the Potteries, a meeting of the agitators had been held in a school-room, and the Rev. Thomas Harris, the superintendent of the Burslem Circuit, in which Hanley was situated, called a meeting in the Methodist chapel, which was numerously attended, and in which the mischievous statements circulated in the neighbourhood were so completely explained and answered, that a resolution was passed unanimously, "That, in the estimation of this meeting, the characters of the Wesleyan ministers have been cleared from the aspersions cast upon them at a meeting lately held in the Bethesda school-rooms, Shelton." At Birmingham, a still

bolder course was taken. A meeting having been announced, at which Warren was to explain the objects of the Manchester Central Association, and to advocate its interests, several ministers and friends of Methodism determined to be present. A long and earnest discussion of the points at issue ensued, which ended in the complete defeat of the Doctor and his friends, and the adoption of counter-resolutions. The agitator and his associates fared no better at Devonport. So hardly, indeed, were they pressed by objectors, that, in many cases, they refused to others the liberty they claimed for themselves, and by force prevented them from speaking. At one of their public meetings, at Camborne, a violent attack was made on the character of some official persons in the town: one of them instantly rose, and appealed to the chairman for liberty to explain and reply. His request was, with apparent courtesy, granted; but he was requested to wait a short time, and it was eleven o'clock at night, when the meeting had virtually broken up, before he had the opportunity of extorting a reluctant apology for the violent terms which had been employed. At a public meeting in Leeds, they were also successfully opposed by Mr. Scarth and others.

While Methodism was in this state, and the "Grand Central" was exerting itself to the utmost to agitate every part of the Connexion, the time for the Conference rapidly approached. Never, from the earliest labours of Wesley to that day, had this religious assembly presented such a strange and anomalous aspect to the country and the world. Throughout the whole Connexion, a leaven of discontent and complaint was circulated with intense diligence. Public meetings were held for promoting the divisive objects of the "Grand Central." The "Christian Advo-

cate," with violence and pertinacity, laboured weekly to depreciate and calumniate the Conference and Methodism; and a whole herd of pamphleteers, led on by the "Watchman's Lantern," brought all the powers of the press to insure the condemnation of Methodism and of Methodist preachers. While all these agencies, with Warren as the ruling genius of the aggression, were actively employed to denounce and destroy that which was represented as an unjust and tyrannical domination, the Doctor was himself preparing, with the utmost ardour and energy, to prosecute an appeal to this same Wesleyan Conference, assembled at Sheffield, and to claim, as the highest object of his desire, the continuance of his membership with it and the Methodist Connexion.

Dr. Warren
appeals to
Conference.

We shall have to notice the operation of both these strange, and apparently conflicting, proceedings; but at present must confine our attention to the latter. Warren was accommodated, during his stay in Sheffield, at the house of Mr. James Dixon, a member of the Methodist New Connexion. The Conference opened at six o'clock in the morning of Wednesday, July twenty-ninth, in Carver Street chapel. Very few preachers were there, when Warren arrived, and took his usual place. On the Conference proceeding to the election of president, the question was raised by some of the preachers on the platform, whether Warren, as being under suspension, was entitled to vote; but, at the suggestion of Dr. Bunting, this was withdrawn, and the business of the day proceeded in its usual course.

On Thursday morning the case of Dr. Warren was brought under consideration. The Minutes of the Manchester Special District Meeting were read by Grindrod; and Warren was asked by the president, whether he

intended to appeal from the decision of that meeting to the Conference. To which he replied, "Unquestionably: my presence here this day speaks this." The question then arose, whether Warren, not having given notice in the regular way of his intention to appeal, was entitled to be heard. A long debate ensued, which led to the adoption of resolutions to the effect, that he had forfeited all right of appeal,—Firstly, because notice of appeal, usual and fitting in such cases, had never been given: secondly, in consequence of having previously appealed to a civil jurisdiction, instead of the Conference, in violation of an established rule of the Body and the injunction of the New Testament: and thirdly, by those calumnious, divisive and mischievous proceedings, in various parts of the kingdom, which were matter of public notoriety, and altogether inconsistent with his duty, if he still regarded himself as a Methodist preacher, retaining the right and the intention of appealing to the Conference for a participation in the rights and privileges of the Methodist ministry.

These grounds for maintaining that Warren had forfeited his right of appeal having been stated, and the Doctor heard in reply, it was resolved, "That, on the three grounds above-mentioned, Dr. Warren has, in the judgment of the Conference, clearly and entirely forfeited the right of appeal in the present stage of these proceedings. But that under all the circumstances, and as a matter not of right or justice, but of indulgence, the objections shall in this instance be waived; and the Conference will hear both the District Committee and the parties who may think themselves aggrieved by Dr. Warren's proceedings on the one hand, and Dr. Warren himself or any member of the Conference favourable to his views on the other, in reference to the

The Conference decides that he has forfeited the right, but as a favour hears him.

whole of these unhappy transactions up to the present period, all merely technical and formal objections being dismissed on both sides, and regard being had entirely to the substantial merits of the case." A proviso was appended to this resolution, that this being an act of extreme indulgence, on a very peculiar occasion, it was not on any account to "be drawn into a precedent."

The Conference by this act evinced its moderation and self-control. There had been quite sufficient provocation to excite the most placid, and to irritate any ordinary temperament. By his connexion with the "Grand Central," and his own reckless conduct, Warren had so compromised his character, and damaged his position, that his condemnation was inevitable, if the ordinary and usual rules of proceeding in such cases had been followed. The proposed plan, therefore, of overriding all technical and formal objections, and of entering upon the consideration of the case simply upon its merits, was a very great concession to him as the accused party. But it was also a course which commends itself to every man as right, reasonable, and religious. Here was a suspended preacher, who had acted so rashly and irregularly, as to expose himself to the most severe penalties of Methodist law; yet all this damaging behaviour is overlooked; and, instead of immediate expulsion, he is permitted to stand before the Conference, with ample opportunity of clearing his character, or extenuating his conduct, if possible.

The examination before the Conference.

The official statement of the Manchester District Meeting, containing its views and resolutions on the various parts of Warren's case, was read to the Conference. He was heard at great length in his defence; and, at his request, Mr. Bromley was also heard on his behalf. Some members of the Manchester District Meeting addressed the

Conference in explanation and vindication of its action. Other ministers also proposed inquiries, with the view of eliciting more fully the facts of the case; and Warren was allowed full opportunity to add anything further in the way of defence.

Mr. Grindrod then made a statement on behalf of the Manchester District Meeting, and respecting the subsequent conduct of Warren; after which the Doctor replied on the whole case. The proceedings thus far occupied the entire of Thursday. On the opening of business on Friday morning, Bromley, at Warren's request, delivered a speech on his behalf. James Wood, the oldest preacher in the Connexion, then rose, and said, "As a member of the Methodist Conference, I have been charged as an oppressor, as trampling on the liberties of the people. Dr. Warren is the person bringing the charge. I care nothing for myself, but I cannot hear my brethren slandered without sympathy and indignation. In all my life, I never knew, in any Conference, nor in any case, such a mass of inconsistency, of vanity, pride, and ambition, and, above all, of malignity against the Body, as I have witnessed from Dr. Warren on this occasion. I believe that his conduct, in going from place to place, and agitating large bodies, is inconsistent with justice, truth, and the simplicity of the Gospel." This short address from a minister of Mr. Wood's age and acknowledged piety, judgment, and Christian charity, and who was known to have written to Warren in the most earnest and imploring terms, advising him to cease his course of agitation, made a profound impression on the Conference. No other preacher offering to speak, Warren was about to retire, when Beaumont rose, and said, "I wish to ask Dr. Warren, before he retires, whether he is willing to

express his sorrow for the steps he has taken since his suspension? I am anxious to know whether he feels any regret for what he has done?" There was no response to this appeal; and, in reply to an inquiry from the president, Warren stated that he had nothing further to urge in defence. He was then told that the Conference would consider his case; but that none of the members of the Manchester District Meeting would be allowed to speak or vote on the question. Dr. Bunting also intimated that he should take no part in the business. Warren then retired.

A long and earnest discussion ensued, in which several preachers took part. Galland availed himself of the opportunity to say that he now doubted the propriety of withholding his name from the Declaration, which almost all his brethren had signed. He was convinced of the propriety of Warren's suspension, and believed that, even if he had expressed sorrow for his conduct, it would be the duty of the Conference to expel him. He also declared himself quite willing to share any reproach which the action of the preachers in this case might bring upon them. Bromley professed to speak in favour of Warren, but his address was rather a defence of his own conduct. He regretted and condemned much that Warren had done; but was decidedly opposed to his expulsion.

The Conference decide on Dr. Warren's expulsion.

The case was resumed on Saturday morning, when James Dixon, John Scott, and Robert Wood, severally spoke. A series of resolutions were then proposed, expressive of the judgment of the Conference on the conduct of Warren, and decreeing his expulsion. These were carried unanimously.* At first one preacher dissented; but even Mr. Bromley withdrew his dissent.

* Appendix N,—Resolutions of the Conference on the Case of Dr. Warren.

The decision of the Conference was communicated by the president to Warren in a note, in which it was left to the Doctor's feelings whether to appear again in the Conference, to receive its decision personally, or to take the president's note as a sufficient intimation. Warren replied that he preferred appearing in person; and on Monday afternoon he was called in, and addressed by the president, the Rev. Richard Reece, in the following terms :

—"I am quite sure that every member of this Conference feels the importance and solemnity of the present occasion. The duty which I have now to perform is of so painful a nature, that I greatly regret, on my own account, that the Doctor insists on having the decision of the Conference in his case pronounced before him from the chair. I was acquainted with the parents of Dr. Warren during an early period of my public life, and have known him since he was a little boy. And since he commenced his ministerial career, I have felt a deep interest in his happiness, usefulness, and honour." The president went on, in most affectionate terms, to speak of the pain he felt in discharging his present duty, he having had a lively recollection of most agreeable intercourse with Dr. Warren's family, and of the happiness with which they had laboured together as colleagues in the ministry. "Since then," he proceeded, "I have regretted to observe in Dr. Warren, on some occasions, a spirit and conduct which to me were quite inexplicable; especially in the committee which was appointed by the Conference to consider the expediency of providing a Theological Institution for the improvement of the junior preachers. From that period, up to the present hour, Dr. Warren's course has excited my surprise and regret, as well as my entire disapprobation and condemnation. I am sure that I only speak the sentiments of all the members of this

The form
and act of
expulsion.

Conference, when I say, that it would afford us the purest satisfaction to observe a change for the better. Now, however, I have only, in obedience to the order of this Conference, to pronounce its decision in the hearing of Dr. Warren ; and, painful as the duty is, I am bound to perform it. The Conference, after a full consideration of your case, has decided, by a solemn vote, that you, Dr. Samuel Warren, be forthwith expelled from this Connexion ; and you are so expelled accordingly."

Dr. Warren, in reply, acknowledged the kindness of the president, protested against the assumption of the preachers, and expressed his strong disapproval of their public conduct. He concluded :—" However erroneous you may think me to be, I do absolutely consider that my sentence is not a just and constitutional one. I think I have proved it in my defence ; and I do, therefore, enter my solemn protest against the vote of the Conference. I think I have been unjustly deprived of my fraternal inheritance, and shall do my best to recover it."

For some time after his expulsion, Warren consorted with the "Grand Central" agitators, and laboured to promote their objects ; but this course was not congenial to his sober and deliberate judgment. When the excitement had passed away, he felt the degradation of his position, abandoned his motley array of reforming allies, obtained episcopal ordination, and became a minister of the Established Church.

Brief review
of the case.

It is impossible to review this subject in a religious spirit, without very deep sorrow. After the most diligent and anxious study of the whole matter, we ask, in utter amazement, What was the moving cause of Dr. Warren's opposition to the Conference ? What had his disapproval

of the mode adopted for managing the Institution, and his opposition to the exaltation of Dr. Bunting, to do with the loose principles of the Protestant Methodists? On what principle did he fraternize with those who demanded measures which he himself admitted could not be conceded without destroying Methodism? These queries are unanswerable. The true causes of this irreligious, unjustifiable, and soul-destroying agitation will only be fully explained at the last great day.

BOOK IX.

THE HISTORY OF WESLEYAN METHODISM FROM THE BEGINNING OF 1834 TO THE END OF 1843.

CHAPTER I.

FROM THE BEGINNING OF 1834 TO THE CONFERENCE OF 1837.

AFTER the apparent digressions in the preceding chapters, we now resume the general history of the Connexion. As it was impossible to suspend our narrative of the transactions already related, which extended over several years, and involved important and extensive results, affecting Methodism in its entire area, and in all its future history, the account of the present period has been partially anticipated. Having, however, fully reviewed those transactions, we now proceed with our narrative.

Effects of
the course
taken in re-
spect of J. R.
Stephens.

The decisive course taken by the Wesleyan authorities, in the case of Stephens, to prevent Methodist ministers agitating in opposition to the Established Church, or taking any overt action for its injury, together with the expositions of Wesleyan-Methodist law put forth on that occasion, and other circumstances which then occurred, produced considerable impression on some of the most active and influential prelates of the day. They came to the conclusion, that it would be a most desirable thing

to draw the Methodist community nearer to the Establishment; and to re-unite the offshoot to the National Church, which they regarded as the parent stock. The Bishop of Exeter was the most out-spoken and decisive in this movement. In a charge to his clergy, at his usual visitation, his lordship used very friendly and respectful language in reference to the Methodist community; but stated, in strong terms, the importance of their retracing their steps, and seeking a return to the Church from which they were assumed to have separated. Speaking of his own diocese, the bishop said, "The great mass of Dissenters amongst us are Methodists; and of these, the far greater portion are Wesleyans,—a class of Christians whom I grieve to call Separatists; for Separatists, I am bound to say, is but another word for Schismatics." Further, his lordship observed, "It doth behove them to ponder well the reasons that keep them separate, and to be sure that those reasons are such as will justify their separation, not to their own judgment only, but also to the judgment-seat of Him who is not the Author of confusion, but of peace."

The Bishop
of Exeter on
Methodism
and the
Church.

The publication of such sentiments, by a prelate so distinguished as the Bishop of Exeter, attracted the attention of the ministers and intelligent laymen of Methodism. They took his lordship's advice, so far as to "ponder well the reasons" which justified their continuing in the position in which they believed they were providentially placed by the great Head of the Church. Some very able pamphlets were published in reply, in which his lordship's *dictum* was questioned and disproved. It was shown that, if separation and schism are identical, the National Church itself is in a state of schism; for its separation from the Popish Church was more direct and entire than that of Methodism from the Establishment. If,

The substance of
replies to
the bishop.

therefore, Wesleyan Methodists are schismatics, so, also, are the clergy and people of the Established Church.

The bishop had said that, in doctrine, the Methodists were in "almost entire agreement" with the Establishment. He was reminded that, if so, a countless number of reverend and right reverend authors had done Methodism a great wrong, in charging it with the most flagrant departure from sound doctrine,—with heresy, as well as schism. But, even if there were agreement in doctrine, there was ample reason why the Methodist should remain as he was, because he is assured of the continuance of sound doctrine; while it is utterly uncertain what doctrine any one will hear from the pulpit in the Establishment. It may be Calvinism or Arminianism; evangelical orthodoxy, or Arian or Socinian heresy. His lordship was further informed that Methodism, whilst greatly indebted to its Founder for a pure doctrine, was equally so for the establishment of a godly and effective discipline; while the national clergy had not, and could not have, the control over the moral conduct of their professed members necessary to preserve the purity of the Church as a religious body.

Again, the bishop was told, that in any union between the National Church and Methodism, one of two things must happen. The prelates of the Church must recognise Methodist ordination, and receive the preachers as validly appointed ministers of Christ; or Methodism must consent to the re-ordination of her ministry. The former alternative did not appear to be within the range of even remote probability; while the latter would never be submitted to either by the Wesleyan ministers or the Wesleyan people. Beside all this, in its local preachers, leaders, and stewards, Methodism possessed a very useful and important agency, which could not be incorporated into the Establish-

ment. Methodists enjoyed privileges in class and band meetings, love-feasts, and watch-nights, which they would never consent to forego. The suggestions of the Bishop of Exeter, indeed, re-opened the Robinson controversy; and the discussion was renewed on the part of the Wesleyan community, with a keener resentment of what they felt to be ecclesiastical arrogance, on the part of the Churchman, and with a heartier appreciation of their high scriptural privileges, than on the former occasion. Nor did the Bishop of Exeter's friendly bearing towards Methodism long continue. A very few years afterwards, he so sharply rebuked the curate of St. Ives, before the assembled clergy at a visitation, for allowing his wife to be present at worship in a Methodist chapel, that the reverend gentleman instantly resigned his curacy, and retired from the diocese.

Among others, that very able and estimable young minister, the Rev. Richard Treffry, Junior, then a supernumerary at Penzance, entertained thoughts of writing and publishing a letter to the Bishop of Exeter on the subject of his Charge, but was persuaded to forego his purpose. He observed, however, that "though these attentions from dignitaries of the Church are rather flattering, yet I fear they will be mischievous." He justly regarded the proposals for uniting Methodism with the National Church, when they were not "exceedingly indefinite," as obviously "impracticable, and in some cases ridiculous," and yet as likely to excite unreasonable hopes, and calculated to produce disappointment and bad feeling.

Mr. Treffry, about the same time, in a letter to his father, gives an interesting incident of Cornish Methodism, and his opinion respecting the progress of the system in Cornwall. Speaking of the Quarterly Meeting

Interesting
incident of
Cornish
Methodism.

of the Penzance Circuit, he says, "On Monday last, our Quarterly Meeting was held at St. Ives. Forty-eight years ago it was held there for the first time; and the same man was Circuit steward that day, as on the same day forty-eight years afterwards. I need not say, that man was Mr. (William) Carne. Forty-eight people sat down to dinner; but there was not one, except Mr. Carne, who had been present at the first. Then the number of members was about one thousand; now, upon the same ground, there are more than seven times that number. But it is worthy of remark, as indicating one of the great defects of Cornish Methodism, that while the number of members is increased sevenfold, there are only three times the number of preachers. What the triumphs of Methodism might have been, had the people proved faithful to the visitations with which they have been blessed, and had they increased their labourers as the call for them increased, it is impossible to say. One may, however, safely affirm, that the amount of good would be far above what it actually has been." *

We may here observe, that those who are only acquainted with Methodism generally, or as it exists in our agricultural and manufacturing districts, can scarcely form an idea of the real demand for ministerial labour among the mining population of West Cornwall. In those Circuits, there is far less time and labour consumed in travelling, on account of the members being so numerous, and of their living in such close proximity; and for the same reason, one sermon will be heard by, perhaps, four times as many persons as in the Circuits generally throughout the Connexion. These circumstances should be fairly considered as lessening the demand for the same proportion of ministers to members,

* "Memoirs of the Rev. R. Treffry," Junior, p. 154.

as obtains in other places. Yet, after making every allowance for these circumstances, which an intimate knowledge of the locality enables us correctly to estimate, we fully endorse the statement of Treffry, and say, Had the Cornish Methodists been faithful to the gracious visitations with which they have been favoured, and had they increased the number of their ministers as the demand for them arose, no one can calculate the limits to which Methodism would have been extended in that neighbourhood.

Notwithstanding the operation of adverse influences in the world, and even in the Church, the work of salvation was carried on with increasing success. In the Yeadon Circuit an extraordinary revival began with the conversion of four members of the preacher's family, all brought to the knowledge of salvation in one week. From that time several other persons evinced more than ordinary earnestness in seeking salvation; and in the month of January, the Lord poured out His Spirit in a marvellous manner. "His arm," writes the minister, "was made bare in such a way as to astonish us all, and constrain us to say, 'This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.' By the end of January the whole town appeared to be brought under religious influence. The spirit of conviction was applied with such power, and became so general, that in many houses business was suspended for some days together. Such was the number of the penitents, and the depth of distress in which many of them were, that we were obliged for some time to hold a prayer-meeting in the chapel every day, from morning until night; and it was no uncommon thing to see persons going along the streets to the house of prayer weeping because of the distress of their

Revival at
Yeadon.

minds, determined to seek the Lord; while others were returning with joy and gladness, blessing God for what He had done for their souls." *

Those who constituted the first fruits of this harvest of souls were met by the preacher on New-Year's day, for advice suited to their circumstances. The number of converts was about sixty. A few weeks afterward, the work having continued with increasing power, when the converts were assembled for a similar purpose, they filled the gallery of the chapel. Much inconvenience was now felt for want of room. Such was the eagerness with which the people crowded to the house of God, that, at each service, it was filled almost beyond endurance. But this inconvenience was soon partially diminished by the extension of the revival to the neighbouring villages of Guiseley and Rawden, in each of which the members were more than doubled. The numerical result of this gracious visitation was the gathering in of nearly six hundred new converts at Yeadon, nearly two hundred and fifty at Guiseley, and upwards of one hundred at Rawden.

The external manifestations of sterling piety were in this case abundantly satisfactory. The people brought under spiritual influence turned away with one accord from the worldly vanities to which they were previously devoted. The old village fiddler, who long assisted in the diversions of the people at Christmas, came as usual, all eager to "pipe," but there was none to "dance." A company of mountebanks followed, but found no sight-seers, and, of course, left the place. Sabbath-breaking and drunkenness, so awfully prevalent before the revival began, were now almost entirely removed. The minister adds: "I shall never forget the visitation of the Classes for the renewal of

* "Wesleyan Magazine," 1834, p. 446.

the Society tickets in March. The old Society, consisting of about six hundred members, were nearly all present; and there were not more than six out of the whole, who did not enjoy a clear sense of their acceptance with God; and amongst nine hundred new converts, to each of whom I spoke personally in giving them notes of admission on trial, not one was found without a sense of the divine favour. All were rejoicing in the pardoning mercy of God. Every member of the old Society was greatly blessed of the Lord during the revival; and such general happiness I never witnessed before. It is impossible to describe the pleasing change, or to state the benefits resulting from this gracious outpouring of the Spirit of God."

The Mission cause still held on its way with vigour and success. The loss of the eminent Richard Watson was severely felt; but Dr. Bunting now applied his great abilities with earnest and devoted zeal to this glorious concentration of all charities. The anniversary this year was distinguished by more than ordinary interest. Thomas Fowell Buxton, M.P., presided, and gave an interesting and encouraging address. The presence of this eminent philanthropist, and the recent abolition of British colonial slavery, naturally directed more than ordinary attention to the spiritual condition and necessities of the emancipated Negroes. The chairman demanded for the West India Islands an aggregate of one hundred Methodist missionaries,—not one less would satisfy him. Dr. Bunting received and endorsed the demand, and pledged himself to do his utmost to secure it. Robert Newton handed in a cheque for one thousand pounds, as part of the proceeds of a Ladies' Bazaar, held in Manchester, for the purpose of promoting the education and religious instruction of the West Indian Negroes. The meeting was

unusually successful in its pecuniary proceeds, as well as in its highly religious tone and character.

Conference
of 1834 : its
transactions.

The Conference for the year 1834 was held in London, and began on Wednesday, July the thirtieth. The Rev. Joseph Taylor was elected president. He was a minister very highly esteemed by his brethren and the Connexion at large for deep piety and consistency. He was intelligent, studious, active, ever attentive to his duties ; and, above all, his character was entirely uniform. His conduct was unbroken by lapse or declension. He was a model of steady, persevering, self-sacrificing devotedness to the work of the Christian ministry. He commenced his ministerial course as a missionary in the West Indies ; and laboured on different islands, with great success, until 1810, when he returned, and was appointed in succession to several of the most important Circuits, until 1818, when he became resident general secretary of the Missionary Society. Intensely concerned for the promotion of that great cause to which his first ministerial labours were consecrated, he exerted himself so assiduously in the duties of his office, that, in the judgment of many of his friends, his great application sowed the seeds of disease in his system, which occasioned him much suffering in after life. He left the Mission House at the Conference of 1824, and was stationed in the London North Circuit ; after which he travelled in London West, Bristol North, and was in the First London Circuit when called to the chair.

The appointment of Taylor to the presidency, at this particular juncture, was an act of great wisdom on the part of the Methodist Conference. Questions of much importance and of deeply exciting interest were to come before that assembly ; especially the appeal of Stephens,

and the report of the committee on the Institution, with Warren's opposition. It was, therefore, of vast consequence that a minister should occupy the chair, not only of unblemished reputation and sound judgment, but one whose previous character offered a guarantee of perfect independence, and who had not been in any way connected with the questions at issue. It is doubted whether, on all these grounds, there was another man in the Conference so suitable for the office. A proof of this is found in the fact, that all the persons who filled the office of president for eleven years forward from this time, with only one exception, were either on the Institution Committee, or members of the Manchester Special District Meeting which suspended Stephens. The election of Joseph Taylor, a man at once independent and respected, was, therefore, most appropriate.

The decisions of the Conference on the case of Stephens, and the Theological Institution, have been fully detailed in the preceding chapters. We have, therefore only to deal with its general and ordinary action. Notwithstanding the troubled and exciting character of the times, the increase in Great Britain of twelve thousand members, in Ireland of one thousand two hundred, and on the Foreign Mission Stations above two thousand five hundred, was highly encouraging. Twenty-four ministers died in the course of the year.

The flagrant and very extensive violations of the Lord's day throughout the country, and especially in the large towns and populous cities, had for some time awakened a deep concern in many Christian minds both within and without the Connexion. The Conference therefore felt called upon to recognise the efforts to introduce some means of diminishing the evil, and to tender all the support

in their power to similar endeavours in future. They passed a resolution, thanking Sir Andrew Agnew for his efforts in Parliament to promote a better observance of the Lord's day; and earnestly exhorting "all our ministers, Societies, and congregations, to afford their utmost aid, individually and collectively," in support of any future measures which might be brought forward by Sir Andrew or his parliamentary friends.

The sittings of this Conference were distinguished by deep religious feeling. Notwithstanding the vile calumnies poured upon them on account of the expulsion of Stephens, it was, on the part of a great majority of the preachers, not only an act of duty, but also of self-sacrifice. They knew, and honoured, and loved his excellent father. They wished to preserve the Connexion in peace, and to devote undivided attention to their great vocation; but they could not, even for this, sacrifice principle and duty. The determined opposition of Stephens to the judgment of his brethren, and his persevering departure from the evident duty of a Wesleyan minister, rendered his separation inevitable.

The case of Warren was somewhat similar. He was esteemed and respected by his brother ministers generally, and by a large portion of the Connexion; but he was unmanageable. Whatever view may be taken of the primary motives of his opposition, it stands before us as an undoubted fact, that he set his judgment against that of the great body of the Wesleyan ministry, and determined to agitate the Connexion to the utmost of his power, to sustain his individual views and wishes. It was impossible that the Conference could complacently contemplate the alienation of such a man. They might, indeed, be unable to believe that he would plunge into that reckless course

of violence which he afterwards followed. Enough was seen at this Conference to induce painful forebodings of the future, and to have led the Conference to meet his views, as far as this could be done, without perpetrating injustice to others, or sacrificing principle ; but, with the temper manifested by Warren, any conciliatory action appears to have been impossible.

Under the influence of these circumstances the Methodist year which followed the Conference of 1834, opened gloomily. There had been a large increase of members ; the religious condition of the Circuits, generally, was sound and healthy ; but a leaven of disquiet and mischief was cast into the mass. The "CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE" continued to pour forth its weekly slander and malignity, rendered as palatable as possible by large professions of liberality and zeal for the cause of the people. Stephens himself was neither silent nor pacific ; while Warren, uniting himself with the "Grand Central," concentrated in one common mass all the other elements of antipathy to Methodism, and prosecuted a course of agitation which ranged over the greater part of the island, and extended from Scotland to Cornwall.

One favourite assertion of these agitators was, that the great body of the ministers were tyrannized over by a ruling clique ; that they were at heart one with the clamorous and discontented, who were called *the people* ; and that, if free to act, they would readily adopt the proposals of the Association, and modify Methodism agreeably to its demands. These statements were repeated so often, and with so much confidence, that it became absolutely necessary to demonstrate the falsehood of such allegations, in order to preserve simple-minded Christian men from being perverted.

The rise and progress of agitation.

The Watchman newspaper. Its professed object and character.

One of the measures adopted was the publication of the "WATCHMAN," a weekly newspaper, the first number of which appeared on January seventh, 1835. According to its prospectus, written, we believe, by the late Jonathan Crowther, it was "especially pledged to uphold and defend, as occasion may require, the principles and economy of Wesleyan Methodism, as settled by its venerable Founder, and by the Conference since his decease." It was added, "It is not, however, designed to make the paper a channel of frequent and wordy controversy; neither is it designed to be Wesleyan in that *sectarian* sense in which mistaken persons may sometimes have understood the appellation; but in a sense accordant with that genuine and comprehensive charity which marked the character of Wesley, and prompted him to charge his followers that they should be 'the friends of all, the enemies of none.'" We are not called upon to pronounce an opinion on a weekly periodical which has been continued for a quarter of a century; but whatever difference of opinion may exist respecting some of the views it has advocated, and as to the course of action which, on particular occasions, it has seen fit to pursue, it cannot be denied that it has ably and honestly fulfilled the promises of its prospectus, and rendered great benefit to the Wesleyan Connexion.

"Declarations" of ministers and others.

Another means adopted to check the progress of discontent, and to inspire confidence in the integrity of the Conference, as well as to expose the unscriptural character of the agitation, was the publication of Declarations by the preachers and official laymen, expressing their respective views on the points at issue, their confidence in the stability of the Connexion, and their conviction of the purity of its government, and the integrity of its character. A general Declaration of the preachers was

published in the first number of the "Watchman." It briefly but firmly repelled the allegations so freely circulated against the Wesleyan ministry. When first published, it had been signed by eight hundred and thirty-two ministers, and these were afterward joined by many more. The preachers in the several Districts also met, and published independently, and in various forms of expression, declarations of their views on the agitation, and the character and position of the Connexion. Many of these were very able documents. The preachers of the Cornwall District held a special meeting at Truro, and continued in earnest and prayerful deliberation on the state of the Connexion until late at night. Their Declaration, drawn up by the Rev. Richard Treffry, Jun., was an exceedingly well-reasoned and powerful paper, and made a considerable impression on the District, and, indeed, far beyond it. The Circuits, also, extensively, in their Quarterly Meetings, delivered their sentiments in a similar manner, and generally in language which did honour to themselves, and justice to their ministers.

The Conference for 1835 was held in Sheffield. On the Friday before the opening, an important meeting was held, composed principally of the laymen and ministers assembled for the transaction of business in the connexional committees. Many invitations had been sent to leading lay friends not members of committees, and about eighty persons were present. The president said that he had called the meeting for the purpose of friendly conversation on the state of the Connexion, with special reference to the endeavours of the "Grand Central Association" to create disaffection against the Conference, and to prevent the raising of those pecuniary supplies by which Methodism is

The Conference of 1835: its proceedings.

Important preliminary meeting.

supported and extended. He then called on Dr. Bunting to address the assembly.

The Doctor said that he regarded the gentlemen present as representatives of the Methodist people, if not in the popular sense of the expression, yet in the sense of being fair specimens of the vast majorities of the Societies. He was, therefore, happy in having an opportunity of hearing from them what were their views with regard to those changes which, according to report, the Association was preparing to demand from the ensuing Conference. He then laid down certain principles, which he put forth as founded on the New Testament; such as the rule of fidelity, of purity, (including sufficient provisions for enforcing it, in respect of doctrine and practice, among preachers and people,) the rule of peace and of courtesy. He then proceeded to contend, that the claims for lay-delegation could not be conceded without violating the rule of fidelity. He freely admitted that those who did not like Methodism were quite at liberty to leave it; but he maintained, that as the preachers who then constituted the Conference had not created Methodism, but received the system from Wesley as a sacred trust, they were bound in common honesty to preserve it entire. So, in respect of the claims for giving the whole power of dealing with cases of discipline to the laity, he believed that they could not concede it without infringing on the rule of purity. Still, however, the speaker thought further guards ought to be introduced, to prevent a preacher from abusing his power; and that in other respects the rules might be modified with advantage, especially as to the mode of memorializing the Conference.

The whole speech was liberal, luminous, and impressive; and was received with great satisfaction. Joseph Entwisle

fully concurred in its sentiments; Messrs. Heald of Stockport, Wood of Bristol, Marriott of London, Hoole of Salford, Agar of York, Chappell of Manchester, Farmer of London, Scarth of Leeds, and many other gentlemen, expressed their strong attachment to Methodism, their full confidence in the Conference, and their satisfaction with the proposed alterations.

At the close of the meeting, a series of resolutions was read: but it was suggested, on the ground of the informal and conversational character of the meeting, that they had better not be formally adopted, but be placed on the table for signature at the close of the meeting. The document * was signed by eighty-one gentlemen present, and afterward by above one hundred and twenty others from different parts of the Connexion, who were not at the meeting. The deliberations on this occasion were very animated and most harmonious. The moral effect of the conversations and resolutions upon the Connexion was exceedingly salutary.

On the opening of the Conference of 1835, the Rev. Richard Reece was elected president; a very wise choice in the troubled state of the Connexion. The Methodist preachers, especially in those times of excitement, generally exercised great wisdom in their election of the president; but it is scarcely possible to conceive of a greater degree of wisdom in such an election, than was evinced in placing Richard Reece in the chair on this occasion. The expulsion of Warren has been already detailed. This was followed by the expulsion of Robert Emmett, a supernumerary preacher, who had joined the Central Association, and of John Averill, who had been suspended by a

* Appendix O,--Declaration of Laymen. (Octavo "Minutes," vol. viii., p. 563.)

Special Meeting of the Devonport District for unfaithful conduct at Camelford, which issued in the alienation of the great body of the members of that Circuit from the Connexion.

The "Grand Central," intent on the prosecution of their declared purpose, and determined to do their utmost to make an impression on the Conference while sitting at Sheffield, were aware that they had so fully committed themselves to anti-Wesleyan principles and plans, that there was no reasonable hope of succeeding in their purpose, if they proceeded openly and in their own proper character. They accordingly devised an expedient best adapted to serve their purpose. All the strength of the "Association," and all the influence it could exert, were employed to collect an army of opponents to the Conference during its sittings. But knowing that under their proper designation the Conference could not enter into any communication with them, they dropped for the time their chosen appellation, and with great shrewdness and tact, about a hundred of them met in Sheffield as "Wesleyan-Methodist Delegates."

Unavailing efforts of the "Grand Central Association" to obtain an interview with the Conference.

Mr. George Cookman, who acted as chairman of the Liverpool meeting of the "Grand Association," was chosen to preside. The delegates met in Surrey Street chapel, belonging to the Protestant Methodists, on Friday, the thirty-first of July. Their first business was to send a letter to the president of the Conference, requesting him to appoint some time on the following day for the reception of an address from the assembled delegates. The president answered, that the Conference was then engaged on important business,* which did not admit of interruption or delay; but he would place the letter before his brethren

* The Conference were just at that time engaged on the case of Dr. Warren.

at the earliest opportunity, and take their instructions concerning it.

After some further correspondence, an address was prepared by the delegates, and sent to the president, requesting personal intercourse on the various subjects in dispute, either by the admission of the delegates into the Conference, or by the appointment of a number of preachers to confer with them elsewhere. The receipt of this address was acknowledged by the president, who promised that the Conference would consider the subject as soon as convenient, and that he would inform them of the decision at the earliest opportunity. They continued to urge their application; and the Conference, as soon as other necessary business had been disposed of, returned their answer. It expressed surprise that no information had been received of the appointment of such delegates, or of their being authorized to act in the name of any important Wesleyan interest; that no "Circuit or Society, nor even one collective body of trustees in the whole kingdom," had announced to them the mission of any such delegate; that, even if this objection were removed, and it was proved that those delegates had been appointed as such, the appointment would be subversive of the established rules and usages of the Connexion: that from these and other circumstances it appeared that the persons addressing the Conference were "delusively" called Wesleyan delegates, the address having in reality emanated from an adjourned meeting of the persons composing the "Grand Central Association;" and that, however disguised, it was in truth a communication from the Association itself: that "the Conference deems it due, in Christian simplicity and candour, to announce at once its deliberate and unalterable resolution not to hold any intercourse with the said 'Grand Central Association,'

The reply of the Conference to their address.

‘or with any other meeting, however denominated, into which persons who continue to be leading and active members of that confederacy shall be notoriously admitted, and receive approbation and sanction.’ The document defended the propriety of this resolve from the slanderous and divisive character of the proceedings of the Association, and expressed strong confidence that, in this case, the Conference would receive the cordial approbation of the great mass of the Societies, “and especially of those whose standing, piety, intelligence, and active support of Methodism, best entitle their opinions on such topics to respectful consideration.” It was also stated that the Conference would take into consideration some of the most material subjects of discipline which had attracted great attention, not “for the purpose of making any one of those revolutionary changes which the Association had demanded, or of abandoning any one of those vital and important principles of pastoral administration which are embodied in Wesleyan Methodism, as now generally understood and exercised among us; but in order to carry out the principles already recognised into yet more extensive and satisfactory operation, especially in relation to the financial affairs of the Connexion, and to provide, if possible, *additional guards* and securities for our people, in reference to the calm and temperate exercise of those scriptural powers which belong of right to the pastoral office, and are essential to the faithful discharge of its salutary and divinely appointed functions.”

The reply closed with an emphatic declaration of the determination of the Conference to refuse all recognition of “the Grand Central Association,” and all intercourse with it, or any individuals in connexion with it; and expressed its readiness “at all times to receive, with the most respectful

attention, the friendly communications or suggestions of any (other) member of their Societies, on topics relating to the great and vital interests of the Connexion." It was also announced that "if any parties, supposing themselves aggrieved or injured by certain acts of local discipline which have occurred during the past year, be disposed to forward their complaints to the Conference, in a peaceful and Christian spirit, and will promise to refrain in the mean time from all hostile proceedings, provision shall be made, as far as possible, to meet such cases by special deputations from the Conference to the Circuits concerned; which deputations, in conjunction with the District Committee, shall be charged to enter upon a fair and impartial revision of those transactions, and to do justice to all parties."

The effect produced on the assembled delegates by this document was the most intense disappointment and anger. They would scarcely admit, though it was generally believed, that they were themselves conscious of the complete detection and exposure of their designs and measures; but they certainly felt that their hope of inducing the Conference to enter into any negotiation with them, much less to make any concession to them, had for ever passed away. This is fully manifest from the official response, put forth as a reply to the Conference manifesto. It was described as having "fury in the temper, famine in the phrase;" as containing "specimens of despicable quibbling, and palpable untruths;" and as displaying "gross ignorance of the history of England, of ecclesiastical history generally, and even of Methodism."

It is not to be wondered at, that the able production which so completely defeated the objects of the agitators, should be so grossly abused at the time; but it now stands

as a permanent element of Wesleyan history, evincing, in a high degree, the wisdom, fidelity, and independence of the Conference of 1835. Defeated in their main object, the delegates had to consider their future course of action, and, after mature deliberation, adopted the following resolution:—"That it be recommended to the friends of Methodist reform, in every part of our Connexion, not to unite themselves with any other religious body, not to form themselves into any separate community, but to act in concert, and to remain associated together, until the next Conference, under regulations afterward to be submitted, and to be designated 'the Wesleyan Methodist Association,' the great object of which shall be to regain and effectually secure the rights and liberties of the Wesleyan community." A resolution which, while protesting against secession and the formation of a new religious denomination, most clearly indicated the failure of all the proud pretensions previously put forth, and the inevitable course to which the "Grand Central" was committed.

Expansion
and emenda-
tion of the
rules respect-
ing members
agreed on by
Conference.

Having dismissed the so-called delegates, and discharged its most important routine duties, the Conference proceeded to redeem the promise of carefully and affectionately considering the most material subjects of discipline which had of late excited the attention of the Connexion. The result was published in the Minutes, as "The Special Address of the Conference to the Wesleyan-Methodist Societies in Great Britain." This document we give entire,* with the exception of its preamble, which has been anticipated. It consists of four parts or sections:—I. Financial affairs. II. Expulsion of Members. III. Meetings for communication with the Conference by memorial, on subjects of local concern, or on the general laws of the Connexion.

* Appendix P,—Special Address. (Octavo "Minutes," vol. viii., p. 574.)

IV. Proposed revision and classification of our rules in general.

In reference to "Financial Affairs," the Conference fully admitted the principle that the public funds, wholly or chiefly supported by the people at large, should be expended, under the general direction of the Conference, by committees composed of preachers and laymen. This principle had been long before applied to the Missionary and the General Chapel funds, and had at the preceding Conference been extended to the School fund. It was now adopted in reference to the two remaining general funds,—the Contingent and the Preachers' Auxiliary fund; and carefully prepared directions were given for carrying this purpose into effect.

The rules respecting "the Expulsion of Members," which had been very extensively canvassed during the late agitation, and, by the discontented, condemned with unbounded severity, as unreasonable and unscriptural, were fairly set forth by an historical analysis; and it was shown that they were in strict accordance with "the laws of God," and of the Wesleyan Connexion. But in order to provide additional guards and securities, for the proper exercise of the powers confided to superintendents in cases of expulsion, the following regulations were enacted:—No sentence was in future allowed to be given in the same meeting at which the trial took place; thus preventing the superintendent from acting under the influence of temporary feeling and excitement.—In doubtful or difficult cases, the superintendents were directed never to proceed to actual expulsion without privately asking information from such leaders or judicious and experienced members of Society, as would be most likely to afford them the best means of arriving at a safe and final judgment.—Every case of

expulsion was required to be brought by the superintendent before the weekly meeting of the preachers of his Circuit, that he might have the advice of his colleagues before he pronounced sentence.—In all cases of expulsion the party, if regarding himself as aggrieved, was declared entitled to the right of appeal to the Annual District Meeting, and, if still dissatisfied, to the Conference, “who will hear him by a committee, or a special deputation;” and also, to have the privilege of being heard by a minor District Meeting, as appointed in 1793 for the trial of ministers; and in every such case the Meeting was to consist of four preachers of the District, besides the chairman; two of them being selected by the aggrieved layman, and two by his superintendent. Further, it was allowed, in all cases where it was “absolutely necessary,” to give the complainant the privilege of being heard by a Special District Meeting, to be composed of all the preachers in the District in full connexion, and four other preachers, superintendents from any part of the country; two to be chosen by the complaining party, and two by the superintendent of the Circuit in which the offence was committed, or against whose sentence the appeal was made.

These additional guards and securities were intended to protect the people “from the possibility of rash or unwarrantable expulsions;” and were generally regarded at the time as sufficient for that purpose, by those who understood and still adhered to the principles introduced into the system by Wesley at the beginning. But those who entertained the views promulgated by the “Grand Central” heard them propounded with intense dislike and bitter hostility. They saw in “these guards” the strongest possible assertion of the right of ministers to the exercise of an efficient pastoral authority in the church

These measures were accompanied by a provision for allowing a superintendent, who believed that a Leaders' Meeting had acted unfaithfully by bringing in a verdict notoriously contrary to the facts of the case, to the plain laws of Scripture or of Methodism, to refer the subject to the decision of a Minor District Meeting, in the same manner and with the same privileges as a complaining layman had the opportunity of doing. The enunciation of these emendations of previously existing Rules was accompanied by an exhibition of scriptural principles, which were shown to be applicable to those cases of delinquency not provided for by any specific Methodist law. Directions suitable to the troubled state of the Connexion were also given to ministers. "While bearing long and dealing tenderly" with those whose cases required it, they were charged to enforce the "effectual execution of necessary Christian discipline on those who, by overt acts of hostility and disturbance, identify themselves as the leaders or open partisans of disaffection and faction;" and especially on those "who continue, after due admonition, to be members of the Grand Central Association, or of any other confederacy formed for the object of systematic agitation."

A third part of these concessions to the laity related to "meetings for communication with the Conference by memorial, on subjects of local concern, or on the general laws of the Connexion." After full deliberation, the Conference of 1797 regarded the regular and established meetings as quite sufficient for the transaction of all business, and the consideration of all matters relating to the Connexion. The Leaders' Meeting for the Society, the Quarterly Meeting for the Circuit, were stated to be the proper meetings for the transaction of business. From these the Conference expressed their willingness to receive

communications on subjects connected with the proper business of their own Societies, or Circuits, respectively. It was declared that "other formal meetings in general would be contrary to the Methodist economy, and very prejudicial in their consequences." Yet particular cases were regarded as possible, in which other "formal meetings" might be necessary; and such were allowed to be held, "if they first receive the approbation of the superintendent, and the Leaders' or Quarterly Meetings, and provided the superintendent, if he please, be present at every such meeting."

It was, however, now conceded, that the details of this arrangement were confessedly "so vague, and otherwise defective, as to require considerable alteration and extension." It was therefore enacted, "That after the final close of the June Quarterly Meeting in every year, the superintendent shall detain the Circuit stewards, and all the Society stewards who may be present, and shall ascertain from them whether there really exists, *in that Circuit*, a general or a considerable dissatisfaction with any of our existing rules, or a prevalent and earnest desire for the enactment of any new and additional regulations." If the majority or, indeed, a considerable portion of the stewards present were of this opinion, then the superintendent was directed to call such meeting by good and sufficient notice of not less than seven, or more than ten, days; the veto which the superintendent previously had on the calling of such meeting being entirely repealed. The constitution of this meeting was also defined. A memorial might be proposed and adopted for the repeal or alteration of any existing, or for the enactment of any new, rule. This liberty was, however, considerably limited by the appended conditions: 1. That the superintendent was to

have notice in writing, at least three days before the day of the meeting, of the precise subject of the proposed memorial. 2. All memorials requesting any change of law should be limited to "such changes as are consistent with the essential principles of Wesleyan Methodism, and within the pale of our established Constitution." And, 3. The rules, whose alteration, repeal, or enactment may become the subject of discussion and memorial in such meetings, must be such rules only as have operated, or are intended to operate, in the government of the Societies at large. Within these limits, the superintendents were directed to allow free and friendly discussions, and to take charge of any memorials that might be agreed on, and be held responsible for their being duly presented to the next Conference.

The fourth part of this scheme, which related to a proposed revision and classification of the Rules, issued in the appointment of a committee, which was "charged with the duty of carefully considering the subject in all its bearings, and of adopting such measures as they deem most effectual for preparing—if, on examination, they find it practicable and expedient—a new, revised, and improved edition of 'The Form of Discipline,' first published in 1797, with proper explanations and enlargements." This committee was required to lay the result of their inquiries and endeavours before the next Conference.

There can be no doubt that these alterations were conceived in a liberal spirit, that they added considerably to the security and influence of the Methodist laity, and operated as an important check to any misuse of ministerial power. It is equally clear, they were too late, and too limited fully to answer the intended purpose. Perhaps no seven years of British history ever wrought such a change

The value of these concessions.

in the political opinions of the people, and in their estimate of rational liberty, as those which elapsed from 1828 to 1835. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Act had swept away old and long-honoured prescriptive rights; the Reform Bill had become law, and Corporation Reform was on the point of being enacted by Parliament. These great changes were at once the fruit and the cause of a vast revolution in national opinion and judgment. If the Conference had passed these measures in 1828, when they were first called for, they would have been hailed as a great boon, and the legislation of Methodism would have deserved credit for being rather before the age. But in 1835, they did not come up to public expectation, and were so intrenched in cautions, and surrounded with protective clauses, as to be generally inoperative. This is particularly the case with the part which refers to preparing memorials for Conference. Not only is there a rigid limitation as to the matter of these memorials, but three days' notice of "the precise subject" was required to be previously given to the superintendent. It is a self-evident fact, that an individual would scarcely ever decide on "the precise subject" of a memorial without concert or consultation with friends. How could any one hope to carry a merely personal project in such a meeting as was provided for this purpose? It would follow, therefore, that in any desire for change, however rational and harmless, the party must take covert and indirect means, contrary to law, to obtain the concert of his brethren, or give a notice which he could scarcely hope to sustain.

Further
action of the
Conference.

A series of three resolutions, vindicating Dr. Bunting from the aspersions cast on his character, and the misrepresentations and calumnies so industriously and wickedly

circulated respecting him, was moved by Mr. Galland, and adopted unanimously.

Further resolutions were passed, and inserted in the "Minutes," as suggested "by the present circumstances of the Connexion." Their precise object was to afford the preachers an opportunity for pledging themselves anew to the great principles of Wesleyan Methodism. This had been done in a very satisfactory manner by resolutions adopted by the Liverpool Conference of 1820. But, as many preachers had died or retired from the work, and upwards of three hundred and fifty had since been admitted into the ministry, it was necessary, in a season of such excitement, when so many confident statements of the change in the judgment and feelings of the preachers were circulated weekly, that a re-assertion of their adherence to sound Methodism should be made public. The resolutions now referred to, and the declaration by which they were accompanied, and which was signed by all the preachers, with very few exceptions, most fully accomplished this object, and proved to the Church and the world that the opinions and judgment of Wesleyan ministers remained unaltered by the threats and cajolery with which they had been so incessantly assailed.

The pledge, given by the representatives of the "Grand Central," before leaving Sheffield, to continue the agitation another year, was fully redeemed. Many quiet Societies were disturbed, exciting meetings were held, and ministers desirous of devoting their whole energies to the spiritual work to which they had been separated, were harassed and distracted to a painful degree. Actions were performed by men professing a zeal for God, and claiming to be regarded as religious, which would have been dis-

Renewal and
extension of
the agita-
tion.

creditable in a mere man of the world. We have no intention to detail the various acts of aggression made by this "Grand Central" agency on the prosperity and peace of the Methodist Societies in every part of the island ; but it is necessary to give two or three instances, just to show the nature and severity of the struggle.

Before citing one flagrant case of this kind, which unfortunately is only a just type of many others, we may offer an observation or two on the nature of our chapel trusts and the duties of trustees. The provisions of the Deed legally define the duties and rights of trustees. All they can claim is, the power to hold the property for the purposes specified. They are all fully informed of this on executing the Deed. They are no more at liberty to alter these provisions according to their change of opinion, or private judgment, than an executor is at liberty to change the bequests of a will with which he is intrusted. The office of a trustee is only administrative. The amount invested in the chapels is not in any sense his property. He holds it in trust for the purposes specified in the deed ; but it is not his. He has therefore no legal or moral right to divert or alienate any part from the purposes for which the subscriptions and collections were originally procured, namely, the service and uses of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion. The Conference are a party to the compact between the trustees and the subscribers, inasmuch as the perpetual appointment of preachers to all the chapels, for the purpose of preaching the Gospel, and administering the ordinances of religion, is confided to them.

All these obvious and equitable principles were violated under the excitement of the times in many places. In Dudley a large chapel was entirely wrested from the Con-

Its unjust
aggression
on chapel
property.

nexion, and permanently occupied by the seceders. But no act of this sort stood out more prominently as a violation of equitable responsibility, and a direct breach of trust, than that attempted at Rochdale. In this town, on the Sunday evening, immediately after the publication of the annual Pastoral Address of the Conference, the Rev. John M'Owan, in the discharge of the duty imposed on every Wesleyan minister, read that Address to the Society in Rochdale chapel. This act, although as customary and unexceptionable as any which a Methodist preacher has to perform, gave great offence. The trustees, a majority of whom sympathized with the "Grand Central," held a meeting without giving the usual notice to the superintendent, and resolved, by a majority of six or seven against three, to hold a Reform meeting in the chapel, and to invite Dr. Warren, David Rowland, an expelled local preacher from Liverpool, and others of the same party, to attend. The Rev. John Sumner, the superintendent, and his colleagues, called on the trustees, and were told that, notwithstanding their persuasion and protest, the meeting would certainly be held. Fully convinced of the evils that would result from this course, Mr. Sumner convened a meeting of the trustees and other leading friends at his house, and held long friendly conversations with them, in the hope of inducing them to forego their purpose; but all efforts were vain. The meeting was advertised for Wednesday, the first of October.

The trustees were confident of their object. As the Court of Chancery was not sitting, there was, as they imagined, no power which could protect the preachers and the Connexion from this threatened infraction of their undoubted rights. But Mr. Sumner

happily opposed to the determination of the trustees a zeal and energy equal to the occasion. Calling to his aid Mr. T. P. Bunting, solicitor, of Manchester, the necessary papers were prepared for filing a Bill in Chancery. The vice-chancellor was on a visit to Studley Park, near Ripon, and Mr. Sumner, accompanied by Mr. Bunting and his counsel, proceeded thither, and obtained a private hearing of the case on the evening of Wednesday, the thirtieth of September. The vice-chancellor immediately granted an injunction, forbidding the trustees to allow the Reform meeting to be held in the Wesleyan chapel, and prohibiting the persons named in the advertisement from taking any part in such meeting. The party returned to Rochdale, where they found every preparation for the meeting, and every means in readiness for resisting any interference on the part of the preachers. Mr. Sumner had just time to issue a brief placard, announcing that an injunction had been obtained, and that, of course, the meeting could not be held in the chapel.

This announcement greatly surprised the trustees, who, defeated in their principal object, endeavoured to cover their defeat, as far as possible, by other arrangements. A counter handbill announced that, in obedience to the injunction, the proposed meeting would not be held in the Wesleyan chapel, but that two other places had been procured, where meetings would be simultaneously held at the time named; that in the Baptist chapel, West Street, Mr. Livesey would take the chair, and at St. Stephen's church, Townhead, Mr. Samuel Heape; and that Dr. Warren and his friends would address both meetings.

These continued efforts of the agitators resulted in much excitement and disturbance in different parts of the

Connexion, and called forth expressions of sympathy with their ministers, and fidelity to Methodism, from a great many Circuits and principal Societies throughout the country.

The new regulations concerning the expulsion of members were not allowed to remain a dead letter. Before the last Conference, the Rev. R. Pattisson, superintendent of the Skipton Circuit, had pronounced sentence of expulsion on a member for some impropriety of conduct, for which he had been placed on trial before the Leaders' Meeting. Dissatisfied with the decision of the superintendent, he availed himself of a re-hearing; and appealed to a Minor District Meeting, on the ground that a majority of the leaders were not satisfied that he was guilty. His appeal was admitted; each party chose two preachers; and the Rev. Thomas Galland, A.M., the chairman of the District, presided. The business was conducted in a very orderly and quiet manner, several witnesses being examined on both sides. After a careful consideration of the whole case, it appeared that a majority of the leaders did on the trial express their opinion that the guilt of the accused was fully proved: it was also the opinion of the meeting that Mr. Pattisson had acted in strict accordance with rule in the discharge of a very painful duty; and the sentence he had given was accordingly confirmed. Several other cases followed, in some of which the judgment of the superintendent was reversed.

The new regulations respecting the expulsion of members brought into use.

The opening for divine worship of a very costly, and, internally, very elegant, structure, which then claimed to be the largest Wesleyan-Methodist chapel in the world, deserves a passing notice. This noble place of worship, erected in Oxford Place, Leeds, is one hundred feet long, and seventy-eight wide, with

Opening of
Oxford Place
chapel,
Leeds.

very capacious galleries, and one thousand free sittings for the poor. It was opened on Friday, the ninth, and Sunday, the eleventh of October, 1835, by Newton, Lessey, Dixon, Anderson, and Dawson, whose ministrations on this interesting occasion were specially favoured with a very gracious influence. Dr. Bunting was prevented taking part in these services by the death of his wife, who was suddenly taken away, after a few hours' illness, about a fortnight previously. It is a remarkable fact, and one highly encouraging in the erection of additional places of worship, that although this chapel was built in a part of the town where previously a much smaller one had stood, by means of an active canvass of the neighbourhood by the trustees and preachers, and the effect of the first services, nearly every pew was let the day after the opening.

Death of the
Rev. David
M'Nicoll.

The Rev. David M'Nicoll, superintendent of the Liverpool North Circuit, was removed from a course of eminent usefulness, by a sudden death, in the month of June. A native of Scotland, and converted when about twenty years of age, he began to preach with great acceptance in his native town of Dundee, and was called into the ministry in 1802. At the Leeds Conference of 1806, when received into full connexion, his sermon at five o'clock one morning attracted the attention of Adam Clarke, then president. The Doctor was so much pleased with the young preacher, that he took him to the City Road Circuit, as one of his junior colleagues. This favourable position afforded M'Nicoll the best guidance in his studies. He soon stood out among his brethren as a man of varied ability and extraordinary capacity. Reason, strength, acuteness, taste, and imagination, were signally united in his mental constitution. His attainments were

in harmony with his powers. His reading was immense; and the stores of his mind, his familiarity with various branches of knowledge, and the brilliancy of his discourses, clearly evinced the ardour and constancy of his industry. His theological attainments were extensive and profound, and the beauty of his illustrations remarkable. He was faithful in the discharge of his duties as a minister; and, in circumstances of difficulty and trial, firmly and temperately maintained the economy of the Connexion. By a singular providence his whole family of eleven children were brought together at his house on Saturday, June fourth. He conversed with them in an animated strain; prayed distinctly for them individually, retired to rest, and a few minutes afterward expired. A latent ossification of the heart suddenly developed its fatal power, and hurried him into eternity, in his fifty-fifth year.

The Conference was held in Birmingham, for the first time, in 1836. The preliminary committee-meetings were well attended; and some of the speeches delivered by leading laymen, especially in the Missionary Committee of Review, were eloquent and memorable. The special and important meeting of laymen at the preceding Conference, and the continued efforts of the "Grand Central" to sow discord in the Connexion, greatly stimulated the action of the laity in these preliminary committees, and invested their deliberations with growing importance. The direct object of each committee was strictly financial; yet, as these sections of connexional finance extended to every part of the work, and were the means by which the several departments of the organization were maintained and extended, they brought all parts of the economy under review, and elicited the opinions of prudent

The Conference of 1836: its transactions.

and experienced men with great advantage to the Connexion.

Nearly four hundred preachers assembled; and, the Conference being duly constituted by the admission of twelve ministers into the hundred, Dr. Bunting was elected president by a most remarkable majority,—two hundred and four voting for him out of two hundred and twenty-three who were entitled to vote. The striking approach to unanimity in this appointment was a testimony to the great ability which he had displayed in counselling the wise and prudent measures best adapted to defend the Connexion against the violent and persevering agencies by which it had been assailed, as well as to his general talent and devotedness to the Connexion.

Dr. Fisk was the American representative; and the Rev. W. Lord, who had been appointed, in 1834, President of the Canadian Conference and Representative to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, gave much interesting information respecting the state and progress of Methodism in America and Canada; especially on the subject of slavery, of which Dr. Fisk said, “It is an evil,—only evil,—and evil continually.”

The ordination of ministers by the imposition of hands appointed.

Mention has been made of a debate in the Conference of 1822, on ordination by the imposition of hands; but, on that occasion, no action was taken. When Bunting was president in 1828, he made a passing reference to the subject, and he did the same in speaking of the reception of the candidates for the ministry at this Conference. There “he expected the matter would have ended. He had no further intention—no scheme—no plan.” The subject, however, was introduced two or three days afterward; when the president observed that he had mentioned it

at the time of the examination of the young men, that he might release himself from the responsibility of omitting an important circumstance, and leave it with the Conference. Edmund Grindrod said he was not willing to bear any share of this responsibility; he thought the present a proper time to come to a decision on the subject. Joseph Fowler observed on the singular fact, that Wesleyan missionaries were ordained by the imposition of hands, while ministers for the home work were not; he thought this dissimilarity most undesirable. Mr. Waugh informed the assembly that the Irish Conference intended to adopt the practice; and if their English brethren delayed to act, the Irish would, in this instance, secure the precedence. The secretary, Robert Newton, then moved the following resolution:—"The Conference are of opinion that the young men who are this year to be admitted into full connexion, should be received by imposition of hands; that this shall be the standing rule and usage in future years; and that whatever regulations of a contrary nature may be in existence, shall be hereby rescinded."

A debate, of considerable length and great interest, in which the subject was thoroughly discussed, ensued. It was admitted that the imposition of hands was only a *circumstance* in ministerial ordination; that the Methodist preachers previously separated to the work of the ministry, were undoubtedly Christian ministers in the fullest and best sense. But it was contended that, by omitting this circumstance, the Connexion departed from the practice laid down in Scripture, from the usages of antiquity, and the course universally adopted by other churches; and that Methodist ministers stood before the country at some disadvantage, and were, in many cases, placed on their defence.

The objection raised by Charles Wesley to his brother's

ordinations was alluded to, as given in the well-known lines :—

“ Wesley his hands on Coke has laid,
But who laid hands on him ? ”

and it was admitted that, with those who held the doctrine of apostolic succession, in the sense of Roman Catholics and High Churchmen, this objection was invincible. But instead of holding the doctrine in that sense, the Methodist preachers accounted it *a fable*. They held that the true apostolical succession was, that the ministry appointed the ministry; and must continue to do so to the end of the world. The reason why the first Methodist preachers were not ordained was, that they were not accounted ministers, but *helpers* to others who held that character; while it was now an undoubted fact, that, by the providence of God, they had long ceased to occupy a subordinate position. They were no longer helpers to any class of men, but the constituted ministry of a large and growing Christian denomination; and, as such, were not only entitled to all the privileges of the Christian ministry, but bound to avail themselves of every scriptural circumstance, and to place themselves before their people and the world as fully accredited ministers of the Gospel.

One or two of the preachers seemed to doubt the propriety of immediate action in so important a case, and counselled delay, at least for one year. But to this, serious and general objection was taken; and when, after the most ample discussion, the question was submitted to the Conference, it was adopted with only two dissentients.

This measure, lightly as some persons may be disposed to regard it, was really of great importance. We regard the conduct of the apostles, living and acting, as they did,

under the plenary inspiration of the Holy Spirit, as the authorized model which ought always to be followed by the church, so far as the differing circumstances of time and country will permit. The ordination of ministers by imposition of hands is one of those usages which, while beautifully significant, is alike adapted to all times and places. The Conference acted wisely in adopting the resolution; and the time seemed singularly appropriate. The assembled ministers had just emerged from a struggle, in which their ministerial *status* had been violently and perseveringly denied; they bore the attack with calmness and firmness, and no sooner had the storm passed away, than they supplied the only apostolic circumstance lacking in their ministerial appointment, and asserted, in the fullest sense, their true and proper character.

The thirty young men, received into full connexion, were ordained by the imposition of hands. The services were eminently solemn and spiritual. The candidates placed, as usual on such occasions, in a prominent part of the Conference chapel, were called on, in succession, to state before the assembled ministers and a crowded congregation their conversion to God and call to the ministry. This occupied two whole evenings. On the third, the president delivered an address; commended the young men to the prayers of the congregation, and offered up the ordination prayer. The ceremony of ordination then commenced. The president, ex-president, secretary, and three of the other senior ministers, laid their hands on the head of every candidate; to each of whom the president said, "Mayest thou receive the Holy Ghost, for the office and work of a Christian minister, now committed unto thee by the imposition of our hands; and be thou a faithful dispenser of the word of God, and of His holy

The ordination of the young ministers.

sacraments, in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

This mode of ordination is still continued, and it has also been adopted in the case of missionaries sent to new stations in heathen countries; and, in particular instances, in a few other cases. But generally, when young men are sent to established Missions, they are ordained by the chairman and senior ministers of their District, after they have passed the usual probation. In case of their return, they are in a formal manner *recognised* as ministers, and appointed to Circuits.

As the new regulations, adopted by the preceding Conference, for preparing memorials on any desired changes in the existing general laws of the Connexion, now came into operation, much interest was felt as to the extent to which this privilege would be employed. Out of three hundred and seventy-nine Circuits, memorials were received from twenty-four. Nine related to matters of minute and unimportant detail; nine others objected to different parts of the explanations and improvements adopted by the Conference of 1835; and the remaining six came from one District, and were, from their identity of form and expression, evidently the production of the same mind.

The Wesleyans of Birmingham determined to celebrate the holding of the first Conference in their town in a manner which showed their appreciation of the honour it conferred on them, and the estimation in which they regarded Methodism and its ministers. A beautifully executed medal* commemorative of the occasion was

Interesting
celebration
of the first
Conference
at Birmingham.

* The medal was somewhat larger than a crown-piece. On the obverse was a half-length figure of Wesley in the act of preaching, and around it the words, "Rev. John Wesley, nat. 1703, obt. 1791. What hath God wrought!" On the reverse, the following inscription was placed: "The

struck; and a public breakfast was given to the Conference in the spacious Town Hall. The room was very tastefully decorated, and upwards of eight hundred persons sat down to breakfast, of whom four hundred and twenty were preachers. The Rev. Richard Reece, the ex-president, was called to the chair, when he delivered a brief but very feeling address. Dr. Melson, in an appropriate speech, presented a gold medal to Dr. Bunting, who acknowledged the compliment in an eloquent address. Mr. Francis Heeley, after some brief remarks, presented another to the secretary, the Rev. Robert Newton, who responded in a very suitable speech, full of fine feeling and manly sentiments. Silver medals were presented to Dr. Fisk, the American, to the Canadian and Irish representatives, and to the Rev. Richard Reece, as ex-president.

An able and acute observer of Methodistic progress, writing at the time, said, respecting this memorable occasion, "Thus terminated a Conference, distinguished, in the judgment of the oldest ministers, beyond all precedent, by the delightful harmony of its deliberations, and by the elevated and hallowed feeling which characterized all its proceedings, as well as its attendant services. Dr. Bunting has established himself more firmly than ever in the affections and in the confidence of his brethren. The manner in which he discharged the arduous duties of his distinguished office commanded universal admiration. His various knowledge, his promptitude, his urbanity, his penetrating, sound, and comprehensive judgment, were never more admirably and usefully displayed."

ninety-third Conference of the Wesleyan-Methodists (the first held in Birmingham) began July 27th, 1836. The Rev. Dr. Bunting, president; the Rev. R. Newton, secretary; the Rev. Dr. Fisk, representative from America; the Rev. Messrs. Stewart and Waugh, from Ireland."

The proprietary Collegiate Institution at Sheffield sanctioned by Conference.

This Conference gave its sanction to the Sheffield Proprietary School, and intimated its willingness that one of its ministers should take the office of governor and chaplain. A sufficient proprietary being formed, and a respectable body of trustees incorporated, the foundation-stone of the collegiate buildings was laid with suitable ceremony, by the Rev. George Marsden, on March twenty-ninth, 1837. The Rev. Samuel D. Waddy, one of the Circuit ministers, who had given the most persevering and judicious support to the project, acted as one of the secretaries.

New chapel in Jamaica.

The progress of the Wesleyan missions in the West Indies in the favourable regard of the colonial authorities, was shown by an act which a very few years before would have been regarded as an impossibility. The Methodist Society and congregations in Jamaica had so greatly increased, that it became necessary to erect a new chapel on the Parade, in the place of a small one now dilapidated, and altogether insufficient to accommodate the great numbers who sought to worship there. On the twenty-ninth of June, the foundation-stone of a very large and elegant structure was laid by James Taylor, Esq., a member of the House of Assembly; and some friends of Methodism thought an application should be made to the Colonial Legislature for a grant toward the erection. A petition was prepared; and Mr. Taylor moved in the House, that a grant of five hundred pounds be made for this purpose, and argued the wisdom and justice of the measure on the ground of the advantages that had resulted to the island at large from the zealous and efficient labours of the Wesleyan missionaries, the increasing influence of the Wesleyans, and the stimulating effect which the measure would have in other places. This

proposal was supported by other members, who contended that immense good had resulted from Wesleyan missionary agency, and spoke of the beneficial influence which would be exerted on the other islands by the fact that such a grant had been made in Jamaica. The grant was made, and a beautiful and commodious place of worship and a normal school were erected: a splendid triumph of the power of truth over violent prejudices, and even an intensely persecuting spirit.

Another and very interesting proof of the power of Gospel truth to triumph over the debasing influences of slavery, was seen in the visit to England of the Rev. Edward Fraser, accompanied by his wife, a lady of colour. Fraser was a coloured native of Bermuda, born in slavery; but so appreciated by his master in early youth, that he was favoured with a good mercantile education, and was, when advanced to manhood, for several years his master's confidential clerk. The account-books and cash were all committed to his keeping; and, as in the case of Joseph, every thing which his master had passed through his hands, and was under his care. He had at his disposal a horse, a carriage, and servants; and, excepting freedom, nothing was denied him. Yet in these circumstances of ease and affluence he was not happy. Although he knew nothing personally of the rigours of slavery, he felt it a grievous wrong, most unjust and sinful. While he was very tender of his owner, and spoke with the highest respect and gratitude of his many favours and marks of esteem, and always seemed anxious to screen him from blame; yet he felt his degradation and wrong more deeply than those who were less educated. The very thought that he was a slave often came over him, as he observed, like a

Visit of the
Rev. Edward
Fraser, a
coloured
minister
from Ber-
muda, to
England.

mildew and a frost. He could not think freely; his mind was in bonds.

Having been savingly converted, and having exercised his gifts for a while as a local preacher, he was duly called to the work of the ministry. At the request of the Wesleyan Conference, his master gave him his freedom without any pecuniary consideration. He entered on the duties of the sacred office in 1827, and continued to labour in the several West India Islands. In 1837, he was called by the Conference to England, as an agent in procuring funds for educational and religious purposes in the West Indies. He discharged these duties with great ability, and in the purest spirit of Christianity. At the Annual Missionary Meeting he delivered a powerful and brilliant address, which secured for him the following high compliment:—"His successful efforts on that occasion fully authorized him to stand side by side with the Rev. Robert Newton himself, not as a man and a Christian brother merely, but as an orator." Mr. Fraser took an active and influential part in the anniversary meetings of several other religious societies of the season, and always with great success and religious effect.

CHAPTER II.

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1837 TO THAT OF 1839.

THE Conference of 1837 was held in Leeds under very favourable auspices. Notwithstanding the general prevalence of commercial distress, the connexional funds were in a good state; the preliminary committees were well attended, and exceedingly harmonious in all their deliberations. The Missionary Committee of Review was particularly successful. An examination of the Minutes produced the conviction that "nothing is now wanted but more men, and more money." Two thousand pounds were handed to the treasurers, subject to an annuity in favour of William Dawson, and of his brother, in case he should survive him. This had been raised by subscription on account of Dawson's eminent services as a local preacher and speaker in support of the Missionary Society, and in order that he might in future devote the whole of his time to these sacred services.

The Conference of 1837: its proceedings.

The Rev. Edmund Grindrod was elected to the presidential chair, and Robert Newton was chosen secretary. A few weeks before, (the twentieth of June,) Queen Victoria, on the demise of her uncle, William IV., had ascended the throne: the first act of the Conference was the appointment of a committee to draw up a suitable address to Her Majesty. Signed by the president and secretary, it was forwarded in the usual manner for presentation. A letter from Lord John Russell announced that the

The accession of Queen Victoria. A congratulatory address from the Conference.

address had been very graciously received. A similar address, voted by the Irish Conference, and signed by Dr. Bunting, as its president, was acknowledged in the same manner.

The storm of agitation which had swept over the Connexion, doing great mischief and preventing much good, having now ceased, increased attention was directed to several points of disciplinary and financial economy. It was ordered that a volume of schedules should be kept in every Circuit, each schedule containing a record of the numbers in the several Societies, and of those on trial; the amount of subscriptions and collections to the Connexional funds, with other details, which afforded a statistical account of the Circuit for that year. Hitherto these had been prepared for presentation to the District Meeting, and to the Conference, if required. It was now ordered that a perfect copy, with other important information, should be made in a book properly prepared for that purpose, and kept in every Circuit in the custody of the superintendent. By this means, every minister taking the spiritual oversight of a new Circuit would possess, in a condensed form, the most important information respecting its past and present state.

More explicit and stringent directions were also given for the due production of these schedules at the District Meeting, where they were to be "read and considered;" and the chairmen of Districts were "made responsible for the execution of this order." Three complete copies "of the Minutes of the annual and other meetings of the District Committees, duly signed by the Chairman and Secretary," were also ordered to be made. One of these was to be inserted in the District records; a second to be reserved for the use of the Chairman and the Secretary at

the Conference; and a third, prepared in a prescribed manner, was to be presented to the President of the Conference during the first week of its sittings. These latter were to be annually bound together in a volume, so as to afford the Conference a means of reference to a complete and permanent body of statistical information respecting every part of the Connexion, and for all time in future. These measures were not such as to attract popular attention, but they were important means of promoting the integrity and prosperity of the Connexion.

Hitherto, no regular allowance had been made for the support of supernumeraries' and deceased preachers' children; and very great privation and suffering had been endured. This led to the production of an important collection of documentary evidence, which showed that one hundred and fourteen Circuits had expressed an earnest wish that the want should be fully supplied. This information was brought before the Conference of 1836; and, after careful consideration, a series of resolutions was passed, recommending the immediate adoption of the generous proposals for improving the pecuniary condition of this class of preachers' children. But, in conformity with a rule passed in 1815, it was resolved to submit the case for consideration at the District Meetings, when every Circuit steward in the District was invited to be present, and entitled to vote. The president was requested to prepare and send to these meetings a circular, explaining the equity and benevolence of the alteration suggested.

The result of this appeal now came before the Conference, and it was found that, in every District in Great Britain, the proposal had received the unanimous approval of the preachers and stewards. It was, therefore, resolved, that the children of supernumerary and deceased preachers

shall, in future, receive six guineas per annum from the Children's Fund, and be placed precisely on the same footing as the children of ministers in full employment. It was, however, resolved, that no children resulting from the marriage of a minister after becoming a supernumerary should be entitled to this provision.

A committee was appointed to make preparations and arrangements for holding a Centenary commemoration of the formation of the Methodist Society in 1739. But, as the next chapter will be exclusively devoted to that important proceeding, we make no further reference to it here.

A decrease in the number of members both in Great Britain and Ireland led the Conference to a very serious consideration of the spiritual state of the Connexion, and of the best means for promoting a revival and extension of the work of God. The decrease, so deeply deplored, could not be matter of surprise. Considering the zeal, energy, and wide-spread activity of the agitation by which the Connexion had been assailed, the only cause of wonder was, that the defection was not much more general and extensive. The Conference passed a resolution that the ensuing quarterly fast-day should be held by all the Methodist people as a day of fasting, humiliation, and prayer for a revival of the work of God. The preachers were earnestly requested to preach with special reference to the subject, and to strive in every way to promote a spirit of humiliation among the Societies, with fervent supplication for a larger outpouring of the Holy Ghost on the Connexion, the church, and the world at large. This wise and pious course was one which, religiously carried into effect, could not fail to produce spiritual prosperity.

The recommendation did not fall to the ground; the

fast-day was extensively observed with devotion and solemnity. Deep seriousness pervaded the services; and many gracious indications of the divine blessing were given. The cloud of distrust and apathy, arising out of the discords, excitement, and turbulence of agitation, which had so long hung over the Connexion, seemed to break; showers of blessing descended on a few spots; the general tone of the Societies evinced a marked improvement; and hopes of extensive prosperity were once more encouraged.

The services of the special fast-day.

There was a great and general increase in the attendance at public worship; and enlarged congregations called for extended chapel accommodation. In scarcely any preceding period of Methodist history do we find such a wide and rapid extension of this accommodation. Week after week, the columns of Wesleyan intelligence were crowded with chapel erections and chapel enlargement, in almost every part of the Connexion.

Extensive erection and enlargement of chapels.

Just as the mischievous effects of agitation were dying out in England, an attempt was made to revive its malignant influence in Jamaica. In the autumn of this year meetings were called, and pamphlets circulated, by the remains of the "Grand Central," for the alleged purpose of establishing a Christian Mission in the West Indies. The importance with which this movement was invested, requires that its origin and object should be fairly placed on record. We will do this by quoting the account supplied by an intelligent and trustworthy eyewitness.

Extension of agitation to Jamaica.

"For a period of nearly four years, one of the missionaries, who held the responsible office of chairman of the District, had shown a disaffected spirit, and so conducted himself as to shake the confidence of the committee, and of his brethren, in his ability to discharge duties which

Disaffection and secession of Mr. Pennock.

called for great prudence, integrity, and firmness. The result was the appointment of a successor, which so mortified him that, from that period, he pursued a systematic course of opposition to his brethren, which threatened to inflict serious evils on the Kingston Mission especially, in which he had laboured for several years. To arrest a career of sowing discord, the committee recalled him, that he might give an account of his conduct; but, instead of obeying, he forwarded to the committee in England a long list of charges against some of his brethren, along with certain objections to 'Methodism,' 'infant baptism,' and the 'Eternal Sonship of Christ.' The brethren, on learning this, held a Special District Meeting, in June, 1837, at which he refused to meet his injured brethren, or substantiate, mitigate, or recall his accusations. The charges were gone into, *seriatim*, at great length, and elicited such a state of mental and moral aberration as cut off all hope of accommodation. The recusant, having inflicted, as he thought, a severe blow on those whom he was pleased to denominate the 'Conference missionaries,' withdrew from the Mission, in order to escape expulsion, and immediately began to form a new Church, which he promised would be a model of ecclesiastical polity and doctrinal purity. For some time the platform, the pulpit, and the press were kept in active play to influence the public mind, keep up agitation, disorganize the Societies, and draw away the people from their old pastors, who had sympathized with them during their days of bondage and persecution." *

It was to encourage and promote this movement that the measures of the "Grand Central" were taken. The Wesleyan Missionary Committee felt themselves called on

* THE REV. PETER SAMUEL'S "Missions in Jamaica," p. 82.

to investigate all the circumstances of the case. They assembled on the twenty-sixth of September, and, by adjournment, on the following day. The charges and allegations put forth by Pennock, together with the Minutes of the Special Meeting of the Jamaica District on his case, were read and carefully considered; a series of resolutions was adopted, which contained an unqualified approval of the conduct of the chairman and preachers of the Jamaica District, and an expression of satisfaction that it had been resolved to recall Pennock to England; adding that "the committee, though they deeply regret the mischievous effects which have, for the time being, resulted from his factious conduct to some of the Societies in Jamaica, have no reason to be dissatisfied with the final termination of Mr. Pennock's connexion with the Wesleyan Body." The object of this aggression on a peaceful Mission is undoubted; its impotence is evident from the following facts. In 1835 the number of members on the Jamaica District was thirteen thousand three hundred and sixty-five; 1836, seventeen thousand one hundred and twenty-three; 1837, eighteen thousand seven hundred and fifteen; 1838, eighteen thousand one hundred; 1839, twenty thousand one hundred and fifty-two.

Although still labouring under great difficulties, arising from the language, the government, the social condition of the people, and the superstitions in which they had been educated, the Wesleyan missionaries in France, with their native auxiliaries, were graciously favoured with signs of prosperity. The importance of the attempt to evangelize a great and mighty nation, which had hitherto lain, to an untold degree, fast bound in the spells of infidelity and

Religious
progress of
the mission
to France.

Popish superstition, was now beginning to be appreciated. An intelligent Frenchman said, "The first Methodist ministers were, and still are, mostly strangers. Few of them could master the language. They had to contend against a prevailing indifference, a powerful clergy, a bigoted government, against all the disadvantages of their position as foreigners, sometimes suspected in their best motives, seldom finding sympathy, and often opposition; persecuted by the Catholics, looked at with jealousy by the Protestants, obstructed by the government, ridiculed by infidels, and finding no kind of support whatever; none but in an unshaken trust in the promises of the word of God. Such were their beginnings. They stood firm, and they have seen the dawning of better days. Through perseverance, patience, disappointments, and trials, they have forced their way to their present position, which is by no means to be despised. Besides their *immediate* usefulness, they have *indirectly* acted in a beneficial manner upon all Christian denominations. They have liberally supported the benevolent rising institutions of the land; they have established Sunday-schools, printed and circulated tracts and good books, and, in fact, have done as much as could be expected in their circumstances."

Testimonial
of respect
to the Rev.
Robert
Newstead.

The removal of the Rev. Robert Newstead from Paris, where he had directed the operations of the Mission and laboured successfully four years, called forth a general expression of the importance of Wesleyan labours in France, and especially in the French capital. Contemplating the speedy departure of their minister, whose ministrations had been blessed to the edification of many, some of Newstead's friends suggested the propriety of making him an appropriate present. The idea was immediately adopted, and carried out in a manner which did honour to Method-

ism as well as to its minister. Lord Granville, the British ambassador, placed his name at the head of the list ; and was followed by Bishop Luscombe and his curate ; the Rev. F. Monod, and the Rev. Prebendary Townsend ; the American chaplain, Admiral Douglas, Lady Vaughan, Countess Fitzjames, Sir Robert Chermside, and a great number of other distinguished persons. The result was the presentation to Mr. Newstead of a handsome silver salver, with a suitable inscription. The whole proceeding evinced the impression which Methodism had made in the French capital, and the high respect entertained for Mr. Newstead and his family.

This respect was not a mere complimentary effusion, nor did it arise from an appreciation of the intellectual character of the parties, or from the position they were called to occupy in general society ; it was rather a tribute to the sound religious instruction and real spiritual blessings which Methodism had been the honoured instrument of dispensing in that country. The following extract from the speech of the Rev. P. Lucas, delivered at a Missionary Meeting in Paris in the autumn of this year shows how the work was spreading in other parts of France : “ I preached at Nismes, one Sunday, in the afternoon. After the sermon, there were two ladies who remained in the church, with their handkerchiefs over their faces. I did not know if they were sick or not ; I said to one of our friends, ‘ Go and speak to that lady,’ pointing to her with my hand. She went, and asked her, ‘ Are you sick, Madam ? What causes you to weep so ? ’ The lady answered, ‘ I am not ill in my body ; but I am very ill in my soul. I have sinned against God. Pray tell me if it is possible for me to be saved from the wrath to come ? ’ I went myself and spoke to the other, and asked the same question, ‘ What cause have you

Instances of
personal
religion.

to weep so?’ She answered, ‘I weep for my sins: for more than ten years I have resisted the truth; and now I think it is too late to be saved. I had a son who died about thirteen years ago, without having been converted to God; he is now, I fear, in hell; I am going to him, and in despair.’ She asked me, ‘Do you think that I can be saved?’ I told her, ‘Yes.’ ‘Well,’ said she, ‘tell me what I must do to be saved.’ And I said, ‘Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.’ I was in a village some months ago, where many of our friends have been cruelly persecuted for Christ’s sake. A woman came to my house one morning, with tears in her eyes, and said to me, ‘Sir, I am come to ask you a question. I am persecuted by my husband. You have heard how I was struck by him a few days ago, and fell upon the floor, as if I had been dead; but, by the mercy of God, I am re-established. I think that I must suffer a little more for the sake of my heavenly Redeemer. My husband told me last night, that I must do one of these two things, either die this evening at six o’clock, or make him a promise that I will never more read the Bible, or go to the preaching. Now, Sir, you know what I have to do; I must die at six, or deny my Saviour. You are a minister of the Gospel; I felt my faith strengthened last night, under your sermon on persecutions; (Matt. v. 10;) and now I feel myself ready to die for the Lord, if you think it proper.’ I could not answer such an important question in the same moment. I said to her, ‘Let us pray,’ Then we engaged in prayer for a little while. We felt the presence and power of God in our room, so that we were ready to die, both of us, for Jesus Christ’s sake, who hath died for us. I said to her, ‘You must not make such a promise. Your body, your soul, all that you have, and all that you are, is in God’s

hands ; and you may depend upon Him for particular help, if you are called to die for Him. See Daniel in the pit of lions ; see the three young Hebrews in the furnace.’ We prayed once more together ; and, after prayer, the woman said to me, ‘ Well, Sir, I am willing to die. You will pray for me at a quarter to six.’ I can assure you it was a very serious thing for me ; if I ever prayed, I prayed then. The husband came at six o’clock in the evening ; and in a furious passion asked her, ‘ Have you made your choice ? ’ ‘ Yes,’ said the woman, ‘ I am ready to die for my Saviour, who died for me. Here I am, kill me.’ He answered, (*‘ Non, coquine ; je ne te tuerai pas ; vas, si tu veux, à la prédication ; je ne te dirai plus rien,’*) ‘ No, hussy, I will not kill thee ; go, if thou wilt, to the preaching ; I will say nothing more to thee.’ If I had time,” added Mr. Lucas, “ I could give many other striking facts of the same nature ; but these will show that ‘ the Gospel is the power of God ’ to save the French as well as the English.”

The dawn of returning prosperity, and the improved spiritual feeling in the Connexion, led in several Societies to the removal of obstacles, which had no relation to the agitation from which the Connexion had so extensively suffered. Seven years before, the Derby Society had been crippled by the secession of which we have already spoken ; and the results of the unhappy movement were lasting as they were disastrous. In consequence of the diminished numbers and means of those who still adhered to the parent Society, a large and increasing Circuit debt depressed the spirits and crushed the energies of the people. The preachers, thinking the time had come to dare the removal of this incubus, they called the attention of their leading mem-

Prosperity
in several
Circuits.

bers to the subject, and met with a hearty response. A meeting was convened, and the importance of the object urged in some spirited addresses. Collecting-books were offered, and about one hundred were accepted by persons who engaged to raise a specified sum. One noble-minded individual promised a donation of five shillings to every book, and another half that sum. The result was, the entire extinction of the very burdensome Circuit debt. Nor was this the extent of the gain. The state of feeling was so much improved, and the ordinary Circuit income was so much augmented at the next quarter-day, as to preclude the fear of any early embarrassment.

A similar effort, on a smaller scale, and with equally happy results, was made at Buxton, where a heavy Circuit debt was also extinguished, and an extended career of usefulness opened in consequence. In the little town of Horncastle a new and neat chapel was opened in the spring of 1836, when three hundred pounds were collected. When it is known that the population of the town was only about four thousand, and that the chapel was capable of containing one thousand, this will indicate the large and growing influence of Methodism. The impulse given by these liberal measures was seen in increased contributions to the Missionary Society, and subsequently in great spiritual prosperity. About the close of the year, a very gracious revival commenced, and at least four hundred persons, young and old, rich and poor, found the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins. The good work proceeded, the people being at peace and unity, labouring for their own spiritual well-being, and for the conversion of those who were without. In many other Circuits similar, and even more extensive, spiritual prosperity was

realized. In the Leeds East some hundreds were brought to the knowledge of salvation, and in the West nearly a thousand, within a very few weeks, in the month of March.

The intelligence from different parts of the Mission field was peculiarly interesting. The Rev. William Shaw wrote from South Africa, announcing his safe arrival at Graham's town, where a special social meeting gave him a public welcome. From New Zealand Mr. Woon gave most pleasing intelligence of the thirst for the word of life, evinced by the recently benighted inhabitants of those islands, and of the means in operation for meeting their wants. A "Harmony of the Gospels," just translated and printed, was eagerly expected by the awakened and converted inhabitants. Great efforts were also made to provide them with suitable hymns and tunes for public worship. In this department of sacred service the natives took great delight; and availed themselves of every means of instruction within their reach.

Interesting
missionary
intelligence.

New and enlarged efforts were also made to strengthen the missionary agency in India. In the preceding year, two ministers accompanied the Rev. Samuel Hardey to that very interesting and important country; and now the Rev. Jonathan Crowther, a minister who to enlarged and accurate scholarship added a wide range of accomplishments and a thoroughly evangelical and missionary spirit, with five other ministers, followed to the East. The character and standing of Crowther gave great importance to this missionary re-inforcement; and their embarkation excited much interest at Bristol, where it took place. When the day of their departure came, great numbers of Christian friends gathered around the company, and cheered

them by their sympathy and prayers. The vessel, with its precious charge of Christian agents, proceeded safely until within a short distance of its destination ; but, when about fifty miles from Madras, ran on shore, and was entirely lost. The passengers and the crew were saved ; but the situation of Mr. and Mrs. Crowther, with their five children, was very distressing. After enduring considerable danger and privation, all the party arrived in safety at Madras, and addressed themselves with courage and diligence to their important duties.

While these means were taken to afford the natives of India a knowledge of the Christian faith by the preaching of the Gospel, exertions were made at home to induce the government to abandon its direct patronage of the idolatries of that country. Mr. Poynder, after a noble series of efforts, succeeded in carrying a motion in the Court of Indian Proprietors which had a tendency to expose and check this abomination ; but he failed in another and more direct attack on the evil.

While so much attention was directed to the East, other lands were not forgotten. The Rev. George Scott was engaged in visiting different parts of Great Britain and Ireland, giving a detailed account of the religious state and prospects of Sweden, and stimulating Christian liberality toward the support of a renewed mission to that country. One of these meetings, held in Dublin, was invested with special interest, from the fact that it was presided over by Lord Bloomfield, who had resided nine years at Stockholm, in the capacity of British ambassador to the Swedish court, and who bore the strongest testimony to the beneficial effects of these missionary operations, and heartily expressed his own personal obligations to Mr.

Scott, through whom he had been brought to the experience of salvation.

Bristol was the seat of the Conference of 1838. Never had the Wesleyan ministers attended their annual assembly under more agreeable and hopeful circumstances. The agitation by which Methodism had been assailed had died out, and was succeeded by the most salutary reaction. A healthy glow of spiritual feeling and mutual confidence pervaded the Connexion, uniting more closely ministers and members in fraternal bonds of love and concord.

The Conference of 1838: its transactions.

The preliminary committees were well attended, and their action was characterized by earnestness and unity. The Missionary Committee of Review presented a fine display of sanctified ability and zeal. Dr. Bunting delivered an eloquent review of the progress, prosperity, and need of the Missions. He showed that, without greatly enlarged pecuniary means, any further extension of Wesleyan Missions could not be attempted. He asked, therefore, whether the committee might expect such support as would justify their continued progression. This appeal was responded to with great ardour; and the proceedings displayed cheering indications of high Christian principle, and earnest devotedness to the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

The Institution committee-meeting was equally successful, although Mr. Entwisle's resignation of the office of Governor, which he had held from the commencement, was calculated to cast a cloud over its proceedings. He had entered on his important office when every movement made in favour of that establishment was regarded with suspicion and distrust. And it is not too much to say, that his character and conduct eminently

contributed to remove such feelings, and to inspire confidence in the management of the Institution. His retirement was very justly regarded as a heavy loss. But the committee found no difficulty in selecting a suitable successor in Richard Treffry, a minister of sterling ability and high Christian character. If he did not possess the quiet and gentlemanly demeanour of Entwisle, he was, nevertheless, a fine specimen of the middle race of Methodist preachers. Large-minded, and unfettered by any party associations, he possessed the confidence of his brethren and of the laity of the Connexion to a very great degree.

On the opening of the Conference, at six o'clock on the morning of Wednesday, July twenty-fifth, after the usual devotional services, and supplying the deficiencies in the hundred, the election of president and secretary took place. The Rev. Thomas Jackson was, by a great majority, elected to the former office, and the Rev. Robert Newton to the latter. The usual routine business proceeded, when it was ascertained that thirty-three preachers had died in the past year: twenty-one in Great Britain, four in Ireland, and eight on the foreign Stations. The number of young men recommended from the respective Districts, as candidates for the ministry, was eighty-three, of whom about fifty were received on trial.

This Conference directed its earnest attention to the deficiency of spiritual agency in different parts of our own country, especially in regard of the poor; and strongly recommended that individuals, properly qualified, should be employed as missionaries, under the direction of the superintendent and other preachers in the locality. The principal special business of this Conference related to the arrangements suggested for observing the Centenary

of Methodism, to which it is not necessary to make further reference.

The tone and feeling throughout the sittings of this annual meeting of the Wesleyan ministers was peculiarly happy and harmonious, and reflected faithfully and vividly the improved spiritual state of the Societies. High hope infused a general animation ; and preachers who had been harassed by difficulties, and oppressed by enemies and persecution, began to breathe freely, and to look out for better and brighter days. Well does the writer remember the transition from that state of harassing doubt and uncertainty, in which none of the Lord's workmen could venture to build, unless his sword and shield were constantly within reach, that he might at any moment repel the assaults of agitation, or vindicate the scriptural character of his faith and polity,—to that state of peace and tranquillity, when every man sat joyously “under his own vine and fig-tree,” none daring to make him afraid. If our taste or disposition led us in that direction, we might dilate on the disturbance which arose among those who had so energetically laboured to disturb Methodism ; we might speak of the third anniversary of “the Grand Central,” and of the position of Dr. Warren ; but in such scenes we have no pleasure. We aim at exhibiting the work of God in the Wesleyan Societies, and rejoice that at this time it proceeded unmolested.

One act of this Conference deserved special notice,—the appointment of the Rev. John Waterhouse and the Rev. John H. Bumby to the service of the Wesleyan Missions in the South Seas. The former was a minister of distinguished eminence and ability. He had been in the work twenty-eight years, had served in some of the most important Circuits, and filled the office of chairman of the Cornwall and Halifax Districts, with credit to himself and benefit to

The Rev.
John Water-
house goes
as a mission-
ary to Aus-
tralia.

the Connexion. The devotion of such a man to the cause of Missions in the southern hemisphere showed that an intense desire to promote the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom was felt in all grades of the Wesleyan ministry; and that its operation, as in this instance, was likely to place such well qualified agents at the most important points of duty, as warranted the hope of extensive success.

Bumby was a younger man, of great promise. He was called to the ministry in 1830, and possessed intellectual powers and other mental endowments of a high order. His preaching was useful and attractive, and his zeal ardent and abiding. The consecration of such men to the evangelization of the heathen and the necessitous colonists of the antipodes, was an event which augured equally well for the state of the Societies at home and the prospects of the Missions abroad. These devoted men, with four other missionaries, sailed from the Thames to their destination in the southern hemisphere, on the twentieth of September, after a most interesting and affecting valedictory service on the preceding day. This missionary party, consisting of the ministers, their wives, relatives, and attendants, numbered twenty-three persons. They were accompanied to Gravesend by Dr. Bunting, and the Rev. Messrs. Scott, Hoole, and Beecham, who bade them a final farewell just after the vessel got under weigh.

These large deportations of missionaries would seem to indicate a very sound and healthy state of the Society, and show its increasing energy and power. But there is a class of evidence, seldom, indeed, accessible to the public; but which, above every other, proves the estimation in which the agents of the Society are held by those who need

their aid, the extent to which the twilight rays of dawning truth have penetrated the darkness beyond the range of our missionary establishments, and the thirst of those who have been partially visited with a preached Gospel for a full and complete experience of the privileges of the Church of Christ. It is the number of applications for an increased supply of missionaries from places partially supplied, and for the opening up of new Stations on heathen ground. When, for instance, we read of Waterhouse and five other missionaries, with wives and relatives, leaving for service in the southern hemisphere; of three missionaries, in October, for British America; and of sixteen missionaries and missionaries' wives embarking the following month for the West Indies, it seems as if the work was rapidly progressing. When, however, we are informed, that at this time there lay on the table of the Missionary Committee applications for forty men, which they were compelled to refuse for want of funds, we see that, however the piety and liberality of the Church may increase in carrying on the great work of the world's evangelization, the Head of the Church has gone before them, and awakened a cry in the hearts of the heathen, to which no zeal or liberality is as yet prepared to respond.

Further demand for missionaries.

Although we are compelled to make this acknowledgment, it is nevertheless very cheering to observe a decidedly improved tone in the character of the provincial Missionary Societies, and an enlarged and more enlightened liberality in meeting the wants of the heathen world. This was particularly the case at Leeds, which now made the first great advance in that career of Christian benevolence which has made the anniversary of that Missionary Association, from year to year, the wonder of the country,

Remarkable missionary benevolence at Leeds.

and placed it at the head of all provincial Societies. The Rev. John Scott, one of the general treasurers of the Society, and the Rev. Robert Newton, with other ministers and gentlemen, took part in these services, which were marked throughout by a fine flow of Christian feeling. The aggregate receipts were six hundred and twenty-five pounds,—nearly double the amount of any preceding year.

Successful
indications
in the
Mission to
Sweden.

The Methodist public were greatly cheered, toward the close of 1838, by the intelligence from Sweden. A Mission had been established in Stockholm so early as 1826, when the Rev. J. R. Stephens was appointed to that Station. He laboured there four years, and was succeeded by the Rev. George Scott, in 1830. This devoted minister prosecuted the work, under many discouragements and oppositions, with considerable success. A congregation was gathered far beyond the accommodation which their meeting-place could afford. A memorial to the government, soliciting leave to erect a chapel, was opposed with great energy by the archbishop and the consistory. These authorities earnestly requested that, in case leave should be given to erect a Methodist place of worship, it might be distinctly stipulated that divine service should not be conducted in any language but the English, or on any other days than Sabbaths and holy days; and further, that the missionary should be prohibited from rendering any kind of religious aid to any others than his own countrymen. As these restrictions would have been fatal to the effort as a missionary enterprise, every means were taken to prevent an issue so disastrous; and prayer was continually made unto God for His aid in this emergency.

God heard the prayers of His people. The “Royal

Gazette," of November seventeenth, contained permission to erect a chapel, "without imposing any new obstruction of any kind." The joy which this decision diffused through the congregation gathered by Mr. Scott, was intense. It was, to a great extent, a charter of religious liberty; it permitted them to hear the Gospel and to worship God in their own language; and afforded means for the extension of religion among their countrymen. The burst of hallowed praise which ascended to heaven the next Sabbath, when they were assembled for worship, and when five hundred persons were packed together in a place which ought not to include more than three hundred, cannot be described: they thanked God, and took courage.

Among the cheering indications of the progress which the cause of Christian Missions to the heathen was making, we have a most interesting account of a Missionary Meeting held at the Cape of Good Hope. It was attended not only by Wesleyan ministers and laymen, but by clergymen of the Established Church, Baptists, American missionaries, and two gentlemen of the Society of Friends. Mr. J. Backhouse, one of the latter, delivered a very interesting address, in which, after stating that, on account of their religious principles, they could not unite with other denominations, as they united with one another, in this work; yet, he said, Friends rejoiced in the diffusion of Christian principles; and added, "I am here to show my good-will to the cause which the assembly has met to promote, and to bear testimony to the benefit which, in many instances, I have seen resulting from the labours of Wesleyans in the Australian colonies." He also alluded to the advantages to the natives of the Pacific Islands resulting from the residence of the missionaries among them. This meet-

Interesting
Missionary
Meeting at
the Cape of
Good Hope.

ing was most encouraging, and elicited the judgment,—
 “This has been the best anniversary of the kind ever witnessed in this part of the world.”

A charge preferred against the Rev. Isaac Whitehouse.

We regret to have to place, in strong contrast to the foregoing, a case which excited considerable interest, not only in Jamaica, but also in this country. The Rev. Isaac Whitehouse, a missionary in Jamaica sixteen years, had acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his brethren on the island, and of the committee at home; and been rendered very useful to the people of his charge. Joseph Sturge, a prominent member of the Society of Friends, made a communication to the General Missionary Committee, alleging that he was informed that Whitehouse had been personally interested in the possession of slaves, and had caused them to be judicially and cruelly punished. The committee immediately called on Sturge to name his informant, and supply a copy of the evidence by which the charges were sustained. They were told that the person who gave the information was the Rev. John Clarke, Baptist missionary in Jamaica, who was prepared to furnish proof of what had been advanced.

The case investigated by a Special District Meeting in Jamaica.

On receiving this information, the committee immediately requested the chairman of the Jamaica District to summon a Special District Meeting for the investigation of the charges, and to procure the attendance of Mr. Clarke to give evidence in support of them. These directions were promptly carried into effect; but, on a deputation of Wesleyan ministers waiting on Mr. Clarke, requesting his attendance at the meeting, he positively refused to comply, unless the court which should decide on the case were composed of an equal number of Wesleyan and of Baptist ministers. This was of course an impossible requirement. Mr. Whitehouse stood bound to submit to the decision of

his brethren, but to no other tribunal. The ground alleged for this request was offensive and insulting. It more than insinuated that the Wesleyan ministers being friends of the accused, a faithful and impartial verdict could not be expected; a surmise which, of course, struck at the root of all Wesleyan discipline and morals; for it would apply to every other District Meeting, and every Leaders' Meeting, at home and abroad.

But although Clarke refused to attend, he sent copies of the evidence on which he relied for the proof of these charges to the chairman, who thereupon proceeded with the investigation. In the course of this inquiry, it was fully proved that Whitehouse had never possessed a single slave or slaves. The groundwork of the whole case appears to have been this. Whitehouse was engaged in building some chapels and mission buildings; and, finding it impossible to hire carriages and cattle for the conveyance of materials, he was obliged to purchase them. This rendered it essential that he should have a place for their accommodation, and suitable attendants to take charge of them. He hired a place called Aberdeen Pen. But it happened, that there were attached to this place, so that they could not be separated from it in the hiring, ten persons, apprentices, under the provisions of the Act for the Abolition of Slavery. Four or five of these were employed by Mr. Whitehouse as labourers, most of them being members of Society. One was an old woman, who acted as cook; the others were employed about the property. Whitehouse had simply hired them by the day, or the year, as other labourers. After the most searching examination, nothing like cruelty could be discovered. The only punishment ever inflicted was a few strokes with a switch on his back over his clothes, to a very disobedient

The ground
of these
charges.

boy thirteen years old, and which were said by the magistrate who witnessed it to have been "not more degrading nor more severe than would be inflicted on a schoolboy in England for much more venial offences than those of which this boy had repeatedly been guilty."

Decision of
the District
Meeting.
Honourable
acquittal of
Mr. White-
house.

The Special District Meeting, after a careful and lengthened investigation, came to the unanimous conclusion, "That we sympathize deeply with Mr. Whitehouse in the painful circumstances in which he is placed, by the wanton and unjust attack made upon him in the publication of those charges; and it affords us pleasure to record it as our deliberate judgment, that none of the allegations have been substantiated, so as to injure in our estimation his moral, religious, or ministerial character. And we heartily approve the anxious desire manifested by Mr. Whitehouse to have the whole of them fully and fairly investigated."

The District Committee not only fully acquitted Mr. Whitehouse, but also expressed its opinion of the conduct of his accusers, in the following minutes:—

"On a review of the whole matter, we condemn the conduct of Mr. Clarke, as entirely at variance with the principles of Christianity. To assail the character of a Christian minister, as he has done, in secret, and endeavour to blast his reputation in the estimation of those under whose directions he was labouring, without any intimation being given to the accused of those things which were alleged against him; and to do this not only on mere report, but (as has been proved in evidence before us in reference to one part of the charges) when he had been informed on the best authority that it was untrue, is utterly repugnant to every principle of honesty and justice, to say nothing of Christian charity.

"That the conduct of Mr. Sturge is not less improper

and uncharitable than that of the Rev. Mr. Clarke. He knew well that the charges, whether true or false, could not be replied to for many months; and that they were immediately calculated to ruin the character of a long-tried and respectable Christian missionary. He was entreated not to publish them until the matter had been investigated; and yet, notwithstanding all this, he sent forth the unsubstantiated and, as has been proved, false statements of his hidden correspondence to the world. We cannot reconcile this with the candour or integrity of an upright man, or with the lofty principles of our common Christianity."

The entire minutes of this meeting were published in the newspapers of Jamaica; as was a very able letter from one of the missionaries in reply to a statement put forth by the Baptist missionaries; all of which were afterward republished in the "Watchman." This led Mr. Sturge to give his version in the columns of the "Patriot," in which he justifies Mr. Clarke in demanding that the case should be tried by an equal number of Wesleyan and Baptist ministers. Mr. Sturge, at the same time, offered to show the documents in his possession, containing a proof of the facts, to any impartial person who might wish to examine them. Richard Matthews, Barrister-at-law, accepted the overture, and requested an inspection of these papers; but Mr. Sturge, being informed that he was a Wesleyan, and a member of the Missionary Committee, declined to show him the documents, on the ground that he was not an "impartial person." Mr. Sturge published an account of this interview in the "Patriot," in which letter he justifies his refusal, and repeats the charge against Mr. Whitehouse.

To this communication Mr. Matthews gave an able reply in the "Watchman," in which he insists that any body of

Mr. Richard Matthews's reply to Mr. Sturge on the case.

Christians would adopt the same course as that taken by the Wesleyan ministers, and try the accused person by their own established disciplinary courts; that this would certainly be done, in the same circumstances, by Baptists or Friends; that, indeed, this practice had never been departed from. Mr. Matthews advised that no farther trouble should be taken to rebut an accusation which, he adds, "I am warranted in saying, is not sustained by a particle of 'proof.'" Such an assertion from a lawyer of his standing may well be regarded as decisive on the case.

Final decision of the London District Meeting and of the Missionary Committee, confirming the decision of the Jamaica District.

The Wesleyan ministers, however, did not deem it proper to dismiss a case of such publicity, without further investigation in England. The ministers of the London District were convened by the president on the eighteenth of March, and, by adjournment, on the following day. All the documents and correspondence, with all the depositions of the witnesses in Jamaica, and the communications of the Rev. Mr. Clarke and Mr. Sturge, were read at length, and the whole case fully considered. The meeting unanimously adopted three resolutions, in which they honourably acquitted Mr. Whitehouse on all the charges; cordially and decidedly approved the manner in which the Jamaica District Meeting had dealt with the case; and expressed their sympathy with Mr. Whitehouse in the painful trial through which he had been called to pass. The case was again considered at a meeting of the Wesleyan Missionary Committee, July third; when, Mr. Matthews having given an account of his interview with Mr. Sturge, it was unanimously resolved, "That the committee fully approve and confirm the resolutions of the London District Meeting; and that they be published, and a copy sent to Mr. Whitehouse, and to the chairman of the Jamaica District."*

* "Watchman," 1839, p. 242.

Thus terminated this strange and painful matter, which would never have been publicly announced, if those who first heard the allegations against a Christian missionary had investigated their truth and justice with candour, or afforded others the opportunity of doing so.

CHAPTER III.

THE CENTENARY CELEBRATION.

First proposals for celebrating the Centenary of Methodism.

As the first century of Methodism approached its close, the thoughts of the Connexion were directed to the propriety and desirableness of celebrating that auspicious event in an appropriate manner. As early as 1824 the Conference took the matter into consideration. Regarding Wesley's entrance into the ministry as marking the epoch to be celebrated, they considered a plan drawn up by a committee of ministers and gentlemen in London, and unanimously resolved :—

“ 1. That this Conference do highly approve of the plan proposed, and agree that the nineteenth of September, 1825, shall be accordingly devoted to solemn religious services, in the way recommended by the committee's printed circular now read.

“ 2. That they also approve of the suggestion, that subscriptions should be immediately solicited from our friends throughout the Connexion, and that public collections should be made in all the congregations which may assemble on the day appointed, for the purpose of erecting some building which may serve as a monument to the memory of that apostolic man, from whose various labours, under God, the Methodist Connexion, and the world at large, have derived such unspeakable advantages.

“ 3. That they approve of the application of the moneys thus proposed to be raised, for the erection of a new Wesleyan Mission House, and of other suitable offices for

the transaction of the public business of the Connexion; the whole to be built on an economical plan, but adapted to the full and efficient execution of that business, which is intimately connected, in all its departments, with the great work commenced by our venerable Founder, and extended since his death, by the blessing of God, into so many parts of the world.

“4. That a plan of the proposed buildings, and an estimate of the probable expense, be prepared, and published in circulars, which shall be sent to all the Circuits, as soon as practicable, in order to guide our friends in deciding on the amount of the subscriptions which they may kindly offer; and that, to prevent all embarrassment from an expenditure not previously provided for, the extent and cost of the buildings shall be finally regulated by the amount of the subscriptions and collections actually obtained.”

The Conference cordially thanked the gentlemen who originated this plan, for their laudable anxiety to promote the improvement of this occasion, and for their offer of liberal subscriptions in its support.

In the ensuing year, doubts were entertained as to whether the date of Wesley's entrance into the ministry were the most suitable period for commemoration, as having originated Wesleyan Methodism; and those doubts prevailed. For at the next Conference no notice of the subject appears on the Minutes; nor is there any further official reference to it until the Conference of 1837.

It was then proposed to commemorate the formation of the “United Societies,” in the year 1739. A committee, consisting of nine ministers and nine lay gentlemen, were requested to meet at a time to be fixed by the

The time for this commemoration changed to 1839.

president, for the purpose of making preparatory arrangements for holding Centenary services, and otherwise celebrating this interesting epoch.

No sooner was the subject fully announced, than it was warmly received in almost every quarter, and strongly recommended in numerous letters. "If such has been our past success," says an eloquent communication dated Lambeth, October second, 1837,—“if our present position and future prospects are so important and encouraging,—what is our duty and privilege in celebrating the approaching jubilee? Clearly this: *that something great should be done*—something simultaneous, on a scale at once sublime and magnificent, worthy of our venerated Founder, worthy of our sacred cause; something that may serve effectually to promote and perpetuate the blessings we enjoy, down to ‘the last syllable of recorded time;’ something that a future generation may contemplate, when a second century of Methodism shall be accomplished, and, while they behold, admire and imitate.”

“But for what *purpose* shall we put forth our gigantic and united energies? Simply this: all other connexional objects seem to be secured by local exertion; but this requires a concentration of effort. We want a *new Mission House*. We want, and we must have, a *new Theological Institution*, whether under one roof or apart is a matter for after consideration; but our work cannot effectually go on without both, on a much larger plan than at present.”

In this manner large-minded and liberal Wesleyans thought and felt; and, with very similar views and desires, the committee appointed at the previous Conference met, in St. Philip’s chapel, Bristol, on the twenty-third of July, 1838. This preliminary meeting was merely to arrange for an adjourned meeting, to which a large number

of the laymen attending Conference committees, and others, with many ministers, were to be invited. This adjourned meeting was held on the evening of the following Wednesday, July twenty-fifth, (the opening day of the Conference,) when the Rev. Thomas Jackson, the newly-elected president, took the chair. In a brief address he glanced at the different proposals which had been suggested, and invited a free interchange of sentiments on the important business which had brought them together. At the call of the meeting, Mr. Farmer delivered a feeling and appropriate speech, in which he suggested that one object which he wished to be considered for the appropriation of the Centenary contributions, was the erection of a college for providing a superior and thorough religious education for children of Wesleyans. With this he thought there should be a new Institution, and something for the Missions; but he urged that whatever was done should be prosecuted in a purely religious spirit, and with perfect unanimity. James Wood, of Manchester, recommended the erection of a memorial in honour of Methodism, which he thought should be a new Institution, adapted to all the wants of the rising ministry. Thomas Percival Bunting supported the same opinion, adding, that he hoped the question relating to the education of the children of their families would not be lost sight of. James Wood, of Bristol, said that, although he had formerly some doubts as to the Theological Institution, he would rather believe himself to be mistaken than the friends who had recently spoken. From all he could hear, the Institution was "working well, and growing in favour with God and with man." He appreciated the suggestion for a place for educating the sons of their friends in what were termed "the more respectable stations in society;" but he

First general meeting for arranging the Centenary commemoration.

felt most concern that some provision should be made for the preachers who were unable any longer to take regular Circuit work. Something had recently been done for their children, but some provision should be made for them. Dr. Bunting thought that it was now universally admitted that the Centenary should be celebrated by a devout religious observance, and connected with some pecuniary effort. Gratitude to God, and veneration for Wesley, demanded this. Thus far he thought they were all agreed. They seemed, also, to be agreed on another principle,—that this practical exhibition should be embodied in a form visible to the eyes not only of the subscribers, in the present generation, or even of their Methodistic posterity, but also to the nation at large, that they might see how Methodists valued Methodism. It was to be not only a memorial to themselves, their children, and the Methodist Connexion, but a testimonial to the world. Dr. Bunting concluded by expressing his preference for a new Institution. If premises for the Missions could also be secured, and a superior school, well ; but he inclined to give a preference to the Institution. He thought, however, that all should be prepared to give way a little, in order to secure perfect unanimity.

The meeting was adjourned to the following Friday, when, after a long conversation, several resolutions were unanimously carried. The first fixed the celebration of the Centenary : the second described the nature of the proposed celebration : the third recommended the formation of a Centenary Fund ; and the fourth suggested its application to the erection of a new Theological Institution, and the provision of suitable Mission premises. The others suggested the adoption of measures for enabling poor members and scholars in Wesleyan schools to participate in

the Centenary services, and for taking into friendly consideration the means of making better provision for supernumerary ministers and ministers' widows. The committee also passed a second series of resolutions for giving the Centenary services a decidedly religious character, and for directing the most important measures necessary to insure a successful issue of this great enterprise.* These provided for a day of special prayer to supplicate the divine blessing on all its services; a Centenary sermon to be preached at the ensuing Conference, by the Rev. Thomas Jackson; the preparation by the same minister of a brief but comprehensive work on the Centenary; the appointment of commemorative services in every chapel in the Connexion, and various other arrangements.

These resolutions were presented to the Conference, as the report of its committee, on the evening of Tuesday, August fourteenth; and led to a very interesting and animated conversation, more so, indeed, than any other during that entire session. Dr. Bunting subsequently observed, "I little anticipated, that, without at least a whole day's discussion, that Body (the Conference) would come to anything like an unanimous vote. When, however, the committee's resolutions were read, they were met with unanimous acclamation and approbation. Nobody was willing to dispute them. Tongues usually most eloquent were then most dumb in the way of objection, and the question passed in a most extraordinary manner." The result of this debate, therefore, was, that the Conference gratefully approved and cordially adopted the resolutions of the Centenary Committee as its own.

The Conference decides on the Centenary celebration.

One of these resolutions authorized the President to nominate and invite a select committee of preachers and

* See these resolutions at length in Appendix Q. (Octavo "Minutes," vol. viii., pp. 356-359.)

First meeting of the enlarged committee at Manchester.

laymen, from different parts of the Connexion, to meet in Manchester, October, 1838, or as soon after as might be convenient, for carrying into effect the previous resolutions, and making such further arrangements as might be requisite. The meeting was convened in Oldham Street chapel, on Wednesday, November seventh. About two hundred and fifty persons were present, including ministers and gentlemen from London, Manchester, Salford, Liverpool, Leeds, Bramley, Birmingham, Bristol, Sheffield, Bolton, Stockport, Halifax, Bradford, Wolverhampton, West Bromwich, Macclesfield, Bury, Wakefield, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Sunderland, Chester, Rochdale, Oldham, Huddersfield, Sowerby Bridge, Birstal, Hull, York, Whitby, Louth, Haslingden, Dublin, Bandon, and other towns. The President opened the meeting by giving out the 218th hymn, beginning,—

“ See how great a flame aspires,
Kindled by a spark of grace.”

After appropriate devotional services, the president gave a very able exposition of the business which had called them together, and was followed by other speakers. The meeting continued by various adjournments until Friday evening.

We deeply regret the impossibility of conveying to our readers any adequate idea of this great meeting, which we regard as one of the most important and successful assemblies ever held in Methodism, or in any section of the Church of Christ. It was pre-eminently remarkable for the fine, strong, broad current of Christian feeling which it called forth and sent abroad in mighty influence over the whole Connexion. Here were two or three hundred Christians, met together for an important religious purpose, without motives to enthusiasm or intense excitement. They were considering how they could most worthily and profit-

ably commemorate the origin, progress, and continued preservation and influence of Methodism during the first hundred years of its existence. The hand of God, in the origin of the Connexion, was clearly discerned; God's gracious providence in guiding the Founder of Methodism through his whole course was fully recognised; unfeigned thanksgivings ascended to heaven for the watchful care with which the great Head of the Church had brought Methodism through all its difficulties and dangers, and given it unbroken peace and large prosperity. All these topics were remembered, and felt, by men who regarded the subject as their own, and pondered it as they would their own individual inheritance. Nor did the experience or expression of hallowed, grateful feeling stop here. Many were led to look into their family and personal history, in a spirit which few had done before. They traced the operation of Divine goodness and beneficence to them and their children, until their full hearts welled with grateful praise to God. Nor was this delightful process confined to a few persons of ordinary character, just emerged from difficulty and trial. Men of eminent gifts, and great respectability in society, confessed with the most touching simplicity, that they owed their all to Methodism; that it had led them to stations of usefulness and comfort in the present life, to the enjoyment of a "peace which passeth all understanding," and to the prospect of eternal happiness in the life which never dies. But in all these devout and thankful avowals of peculiar obligation, the anti-sectarian spirit of Methodism was eminently apparent: it was a grateful love which embraced "all those who love our Lord Jesus in sincerity." This hallowed feeling swelled in every bosom, and led all to feel as one of the speakers said, "I think we have got already into a higher dispensation, more of heaven, and less of earth, impregnating our atmosphere."

We regard this meeting, therefore, when considered as a means of calling forth an extraordinary amount of holy feeling and pious gratitude to God, as one of the most remarkable on record.

its remarkable success,

But the several sessions of this assembly were not absorbed in effusions of feeling, nor devoted exclusively to pious excitement, or even to grateful emotions. It was eminently an assembly for special and important business. It had to define the nature and character of the Centenary services; to decide on the specific objects to which the Centenary Fund should be appropriated; to organize the agency by which this vast movement was to be carried to every part of Great Britain, and, indeed, of the Methodist Connexion; to sketch a general plan for these operations, suited to their vast range, and capable of universal adaptation. These and other necessary arrangements engaged the utmost ability and energies of the assembled ministers and laymen, who proved themselves fully equal to the task. Twenty-five carefully prepared and elaborate Resolutions, all unanimously adopted, mapped out a plan of proceeding at once comprehensive and minute. Much, indeed, was left to be devised in the various localities. Great adaptations were necessary under different circumstances, and ample scope was allowed for these: but, as a general plan, it was complete; no principle was left unsettled, nothing that could lead to doubtful disputation. This part of these deliberations, considering the circumstances in which the parties were placed, is worthy of special observation.

But there was yet another part of the action of these meetings, which at the time elicited more surprise, and which even now deserves an admiration perhaps beyond any other. We refer to the amount of pecuniary subscriptions. Here it must be specially noted that there was no cause of

distress to be pleaded as the ground of contributing. Had there been a debt, or a definite and obvious necessity, calling for a specific sum, the case had been altogether different. The claim was a simple, logical induction from admitted fact:—Methodism has been an unspeakable blessing, and conferred incalculable advantages, temporally and spiritually, on Methodists; they are therefore bound, at the close of the first century of its existence, to present a thank-offering to God as a token of their grateful love. Under this influence the contributions began. It was not certainly known what would be done with the money. Some spoke of a college; and, after a while, a new Institution, Mission premises, a missionary ship, and other objects, were pretty clearly admitted. Yet no one knew the amount required. At first, £50,000 or £60,000 was spoken of. Dr. Bunting's estimate for defined objects nearly reached £70,000, and he thought £80,000 might be raised. Others, more sanguine, pleaded for £100,000; while the venerable Richard Reece, more daring than any other, asked for £110,000. Dr. Bunting hoped that the meeting would not separate until at least £10,000 or £12,000 were promised.

The persons present were left to announce the amount of their contributions; and the aggregate of their offerings, instead of staying at £10,000, reached just treble that sum. The first published list, printed a fortnight after the first day of the meeting, and which had been augmented by the donations of several persons not present on that occasion, amounted to about *forty-five thousand pounds!*—half the sum the conveners of the meeting expected to obtain from the whole Connexion. So completely did the grateful love and spontaneous benevolence of Methodists, when brought to a serious religious review of their great privileges, distance

all calculation. The very successful issue of this appeal was mainly owing to the noble example set by some truly Christian and liberal ladies and gentlemen. This first list contains the names of eleven persons who gave one thousand pounds each, and of fifteen others who presented five hundred pounds, or guineas, each.

This result delighted and surprised the Methodists themselves, and spread astonishment among other observers. One of the Liverpool newspapers, not at all in the interest of the community, said in allusion to the Manchester meetings: "The Wesleyan Methodists are an extraordinary Body. Nothing is too great or comprehensive for them to grapple with. In the space of two days, the subscriptions at the Manchester treasury amounted to the astonishing sum of £27,000; and it is confidently expected that considerably more than £100,000 will be realized, when the plans and intentions of the committee of management are known. We are convinced that a triumphant conclusion awaits their exertions; for hitherto they have

‘Laughed at impossibilities,
And cried, It shall be done.’ ”

Noble response made by the students at the Hoxton Institution.

The first fruits of this noble meeting were a generous flow of feeling and liberality among the students in the Institution at Hoxton. When intelligence of the doings at the northern capital reached these young men, it went, said Mr. Arthur, "like fire from study to study," and produced such a general effect on their minds, that the governor, the Rev. Richard Treffry, said he had no alternative but to request them to retire, and consider the whole matter by themselves. On the evening of Wednesday, November fourteenth, they resolved to hold a meeting at noon the next day, and to invite all the officers and members of the Institution Committee to attend.

The meeting assembled in the library of the Institution : the president, Dr. Bunting, who, with the other officers, and many members of the committee, readily accepted the invitation, took the chair. In giving a brief account of the Manchester meetings, he said, "After a preliminary meeting, on Tuesday evening, a general order of proceeding had been thought upon, but no one anticipated what followed. The hand of God had been on them for good ; a very extraordinary influence rested on the meeting, an influence for which he believed they would all be the better both in time and eternity." He then observed, that considering the prominence given to the interests of the Institution by those who most zealously promoted the Centenary effort, he thought the students should come forward, "and afford their testimony to its value ; but prompt as had been his thinkings, their acting had been still more prompt. He was glad to find that as soon as they had seen the resolutions of the Manchester meetings, they had spontaneously resolved to join in the effort to the utmost of their ability. He hoped that in all that was useful and holy they would always outrun their fathers and brethren." The senior student, James S. Thomas, then moved the first resolution, and was followed by Thomas Williams, William Arthur, Francis Wilson, William Wilson, and others. One of the speakers most appropriately and feelingly closed his address, by saying, "They knew their share in the effort could be but small, and that they *themselves* were unworthy of the honourable station which they would shortly be called to fill ; but they laid their offering on the altar which sanctifieth the gift, sincerely saying,—

' Small as it is, 't is all my store :

More shouldst Thou have, if I had more.' "

The Revs. E. Grindrod, A. E. Farrar, John Beecham, and

the chairman addressed the students, who then announced their contributions, and the meeting closed. These subscriptions in their relative amount, considering the limited means of the parties, were, perhaps, more remarkable than any of the princely benefactions at Manchester. There were sixty-one students, and the aggregate of their subscriptions was five hundred and thirty-three pounds eight shillings, making an average of above eight guineas each ! A noble and enlightened testimony to the immense advantages conferred by the Institution !

Centenary
meeting at
Liverpool.

In pursuance of the plan devised at Manchester, the Centenary meeting for the Liverpool, Macclesfield, North Wales, and Isle of Man Districts, was held at Liverpool, on Wednesday, November twenty-first. James Wood, of Manchester, took the chair at ten o'clock. After a long morning sitting it was adjourned, and resumed at half-past six. This meeting was held under very serious disadvantages. The great meeting at Manchester had taken place but a few days previously, and the principal Wesleyans of Liverpool had attended, and announced their subscriptions there. Yet the meeting was in every respect successful. The chairman, the Revs. F. A. West, James Dixon, George Marsden, Robert Newton, and others, delivered very able and effective speeches ; which raised and sustained the hallowed and grateful feeling, and led to generous contributions similar to those witnessed elsewhere. We have no means of knowing the exact amount realized this day, in addition to what had been previously announced ; but it is certain that it added its thousands to the general Centenary Fund.

Centenary
meeting in
London.

The next central meeting, according to the plan of the committee, was held in London, for the south and south-eastern Districts, on the seventh of December. As at

Manchester, the President of the Conference took the chair, and began the business with a long and very animated speech. Except a short adjournment in the middle of the day, the meeting lasted from ten o'clock in the morning until the evening. The principal speakers were the Revs. Dr. Bunting, F. A. West, Dr. Beaumont, Jenkins, Atherton, and Messrs. Elliot, J. Corderoy, T. Gurney, Sergeant Rudd, James Heald, T. Farmer, T. F. Rance, T. Marriott, James Wood, (Manchester,) Chappell, and Walton. It may be fairly questioned whether, throughout the whole of the Centenary movement, there was ever a better meeting than this. But perhaps the most touching feature, in the announcement of subscriptions, was the reference frequently made to departed loved ones, or to departed worth. The manner in which Mr. Farmer gave one hundred pounds in memory of the late Mr. Butterworth, and in which the Rev. W. M. Bunting announced fifty pounds, "as one that mourned for his mother," and twenty-five pounds each in remembrance of the Rev. Richard Watson and Mrs. Bulmer, with other offerings of a similar character, was deeply affecting, and produced profound sensations.

The whole assembly seemed to be of one heart and one soul. The addresses brought out so many incidents of deep interest in the life and labours of Wesley and the early history of Methodism, and contained so much sparkling eloquence and deep spiritual piety, that the attention and feeling were fully sustained throughout, and the tone of the meeting was of the most hallowed and delightful character. As to financial results, it is believed that it stands pre-eminent as a single day's contribution, even in those times of remarkable benevolence: it added to the common stock just ten thousand pounds. After the meeting, many ministers and friends dined together at the London Coffee

House, Ludgate Hill; where their physical wants were not only supplied, but "the feast of reason and the flow of soul" was continued for some time, to the edification and delight of all. No one who shared the delightful services of that day, and entered into the spirit generally prevalent, will fail to cherish the remembrance of it to his dying hour.

The other
central
meetings.

Our notice of the other central meetings, very important as they all were, lighting up the flame of grateful love to the surrounding Circuits, must be very brief. The next in order was held in Bristol, for the West of England and South Wales. Here, also, the President of the Conference was chairman; and in a very lucid speech exhibited the prominence with which Bristol stood associated with early Methodism, as the place where Wesley began to preach in the open air; where the Society was first divided into classes; where the weekly contributions of Methodism originated; and where, also, Charles Wesley, the sweet singer of our Israel, dwelt, and composed many of his inimitable hymns. The Rev. F. A. West, one of the general secretaries, then read a list of the subscriptions already announced from persons residing within the western District. Dr. Bunting spoke next, and with his usual ability and power set forth the substance and scope of the resolutions passed at Manchester; and thus placed the whole Centenary subject before the meeting. Time was then allowed, as usual, for the announcement of subscriptions. John Irving immediately rose, and offered the princely donation of one thousand five hundred pounds. Other contributions followed, which were continued during the evening meeting, and the subscriptions of the day amounted to six thousand four hundred and seventy-three pounds thirteen shillings.

The Birmingham meeting, for the contiguous midland Districts, was held on Wednesday, December the twelfth, under the same presidency, supported by the same band of devoted Methodists, who had been the principal speakers at the other meetings, namely, the Revs. R. Newton, T. Lessey, Dr. Beaumont, and Messrs. J. Wood, Chappell, Bealey, T. P. Bunting, &c. This meeting was of the same description as the preceding ones; and characterized by unity, piety, and large-minded liberality. The contributions reached four thousand five hundred and sixty-nine pounds.

The meeting for Sheffield and the Nottingham and Derby Districts was held on the following Friday at Sheffield. The Rev. T. Jackson presided, and was assisted by the Revs. R. Reece, R. Waddy, J. Rigg, J. Anderson, J. Hickling, J. Cusworth, and R. Newton, with Messrs. Wood, (Manchester,) Heald, Vickers, and Longden. The addresses and spirit of this day appear even to have exceeded that of the ordinary Centenary meetings. The amount of subscriptions was six thousand four hundred and seventy-five pounds, exclusive of some previously promised.

The meeting for the division comprising the West Riding Districts was held at Leeds on Monday, December the seventeenth. The President of the Conference took the chair, and was supported by a large array of ministers and respectable laymen. The chairman opened the business with his usual felicity of manner. After some general remarks, he alluded to the first missionary meeting at Leeds, and then proceeded to say: "A few years ago, when Mr. Samuel Wesley, nephew of Mr. John Wesley, and son of Charles, came to open the Brunswick organ in Leeds, he consulted him on the subject, and also called upon him, after his return, to inform him of what passed. He said, he had witnessed such a scene in Brunswick chapel as he

had never seen before. He had heard Mr. Galland preach ; and, from a Greek criticism then under discussion, he discovered that he was a learned man : but when he heard Mr. Newton preach, he could have thought that Longinus was risen from the dead. He also observed, that when he opened the organ, he played the Hundredth Psalm tune, and the congregation sang with such power that he could not make the instrument be heard, although he used every effort to accomplish it ; and they took the tune completely out of his hands. To a musical friend, who was standing by him in the orchestra, he remarked, ‘I have come all the way from London to open this organ, and here I am playing second fiddle !’” “During the last few weeks,” continued President Jackson, “we have had many harmonious concerts, and much delightful harmony ; and those who now take the lead in this business, hope that their Leeds friends will serve them as they once served the son of Charles Wesley, and take it out of their hands.” Immediately, the subscriptions began to be announced, and continued through a great part of the morning sitting. After a while Dr. Bunting delivered an animated speech, in which he gave many important details respecting the Institution. At the opening of the evening sitting William Dawson delivered a very eloquent address. He was followed by the Rev. George Morley, Mr. W. G. Scarth, and others ; and the meeting closed. As the large sum of six thousand one hundred and thirty pounds had been subscribed before the meeting, by persons in this division, it was not expected that the sums offered during the day would make an important amount ; but ten thousand five hundred and ninety pounds were added to the fund, making altogether an aggregate of sixteen thousand seven hundred and twenty pounds from the West Riding division.

The meeting for the Hull, Lincolnshire, York, and Whitby Districts was held at Hull on the nineteenth of December. It was attended by just the same Centenary staff, and the same delightful and hallowed feeling and noble liberality, as those already described, characterized it.

Newcastle-on-Tyne was the place appointed for holding the divisional meeting for all the northern Districts. It was conducted in the usual manner, by the same ministers and laymen, on Friday, the twenty-first of December. The attendance was large and respectable, and the addresses eloquent and powerful. The most remarkable of these, however,—even when considered as a production of that time, but more especially, if read after a lapse of intervening years, and with a recollection of the events which have since transpired,—was that of the Rev. James Everett. He had announced a subscription of £20, at the Manchester meeting, as the author of “*The Disputants* ;” and, alluding to that fact, he now said, “At the close of the meeting in Manchester, he felt as if he had made a fool of himself through the fever of high-wrought feeling ; and that feeling was not diminished on the present occasion. He was willing to become a fool if, in that folly, he could evince his attachment to Wesleyan Methodism. Had it been daylight, he could have seen the house in which his hands had committed to the flames between fourteen and fifteen hundred copies of the work called ‘*The Disputants*.’ In the views he then took of the subject, he now found himself to have been erroneous ; but that error he had corrected in the most brilliant and summary way. The Institution was already doing good, more might be expected from it, and ample security was given for the remainder, in the excellent men to whose wisdom and piety its concerns were confided. To Methodism, as a

system, he never could be opposed. He owed too much to it ever to forget the benefits it had conferred upon him." Mr. Everett proceeded, at considerable length, to show the important position Newcastle occupied in Methodist history, and the number of able men which the District had given to the Connexion. The aggregate subscriptions at the meeting were eight thousand nine hundred and seventy-five pounds.

The last Centenary meeting of this divisional series was held in Dublin for all Ireland. The President was supported by the Revs. R. Newton, James Dixon, T. Lessey, and Messrs. S. H. Smith, of Sheffield, and Crook, of Liverpool, as a deputation. The Revs. T. Waugh, Tobias, Stewart, and many Irish laymen, took part in the meeting, which was very excellent in speeches, spirit, and results. The amount subscribed was five thousand pounds.

We have thus far sketched the initiation and early progress of this truly wonderful movement. It originated in an inquiry in the Conference, which resulted in the appointment of a committee. This committee presented a report as a series of resolutions, which was received and approved by the next Conference, which resolved that the first meeting should be held at Manchester. This meeting decided to divide great Britain and Ireland into nine divisions, in each of which a central meeting was to be held, in the principal city or town, preparatory to similar gatherings in every Circuit. The result of the Manchester and of the nine divisional meetings has been briefly detailed; but are we prepared for the exhibition of Christian liberality which the total of these contributions supplies? These ten meetings, without any pressure, any necessity, but the impelling power of personal gratitude to God, produced a list of promised subscriptions amounting to ONE HUNDRED

Surprising
financial
results of
these meet-
ings.

AND SIXTY THOUSAND POUNDS! Where, in the whole range of religious history, shall we find a parallel?

But the Centenary movement did not terminate here. These meetings, as centres of great divisions of the country, undoubtedly kindled a flame in the hearts of leading members whose means enabled them to travel the requisite distance to attend them. It was yet to be ascertained whether the less opulent of the middle and poorer classes would, in their own localities, enter into the same spirit, and follow the example of their more wealthy brethren. They did so almost universally, and with equal, if not intenser, feeling and liberality. We attended some of the most important divisional meetings; heard our most wealthy men announce their princely donations; and never so admired many of them as on these occasions. Never have we seen the rich man more fully lost in the manifestation of Christian character. Christian humility, deepest gratitude, simple and unaffected liberality, were the prominent features which called forth admiration. Yet in many a Circuit meeting, in remote and unmentioned localities, we saw poor men, presenting their sovereign, or their five shillings, display as much intelligent feeling and grateful love, while the big tear trickled over their faces, and the suppressed exclamation was just audible, "What shall I render unto the Lord for all His benefits?" And when it is considered that the ten principal meetings were succeeded by above four hundred and thirty Circuit meetings, ranging over the whole of Great Britain and Ireland, some conception may be formed of the amount of religious and connexional influence exerted in the country.

The celebration of the Centenary of Methodism was in itself a simple and natural conception. That men who had seen the rise, progress, and maturity of such a system

should desire in some signal manner to celebrate the one hundredth year of its existence, might naturally be expected. But that the attempt should realize an amount of pecuniary contributions threefold more than was anticipated, and at the same time diffuse a leaven of holy joy and devout thanksgiving throughout the whole Connexion, is a fact so startling, that it requires explanation; and we cannot explain the causes of this remarkable success better than by quoting from the committee's able Report.

General character of the movement.

“The success of the whole Centenary enterprise was, in a high degree, under God, to be attributed to the influence of the District and Circuit meetings, which afforded an opportunity for all persons to express their views, and their sense of obligation to Methodism. Nothing could exceed the religious enthusiasm of the movement. Public meetings were generally and earnestly called for. Deputations from the central committee were hailed with joy, and one feeling pervaded every assembly. All rejoiced that they were permitted to see such a day. The young felt that they were connected with by-gone times, and associated with the fathers of Methodism, to catch their mantle, and a double portion of their spirit. Men of all ages were present. Some, tottering on the verge of the grave, with heads ‘white as snow in Salmon,’ and hands lifted up in blessing, told of the persecutions and sorrows of their early days, and of the labours and successes of *their* fathers; that their children, fallen on happier times, might tell it to their children, and to the generations following. Many a tear was shed when these patriarchs, with a tremulous voice and withered hands, invoked the blessing of God to rest upon their children, and upon their children’s children, and fervently implored Him to preserve their

beloved Connexion as long as sun and moon shall endure. And after the aged had told their tale of sorrows, and joys, and hopes ; a young man, a Methodist of the third or even the fourth generation, would manifest a zeal and attachment to the cause of God which gave assurance of his faithful services being fully consecrated to Christ and His Church. All hearts were more united when they left these hallowed scenes than when they entered. The speakers generally dwelt on their obligations to Methodism, as the means employed by the Spirit to bring them to the knowledge of the truth ; and often they detailed the circumstances of their conversion with the most happy effect. All caught a fresh glow of gratitude and joy ; all resolved on more entire devotedness to God. These statements were interspersed with historical references to the introduction of Methodism into the places where such meetings were held. It is much to be regretted, that more of these notices were not preserved. Many of the central meetings were greatly indebted to the honoured president of the Conference, the Rev. Thomas Jackson, for his copious information respecting the early and even the local history of Methodism ; for his sound judgment ; and for the spirit of holy joy which he so uniformly diffused. The Centenary celebration was also aided by the Rev. Dr. Newton, the secretary of the Conference, who attended most of the central meetings, and by his warm-hearted appeals greatly promoted both the religious and the pecuniary objects of the Centenary." *

We cannot tell the full amount promised when the subscription lists were closed ; it must have exceeded £230,000. For as the sums were to be paid (whenever the donors desired it) in three annual instalments, many deaths

Total
amount of
contribu-
tions.

* "Report of Wesleyan Centenary Fund," p. xxxiv.

must have occurred before all these were due, and, doubtless, in some cases, they were not paid. Many of the contributors were in trade, and far from wealthy; and as agricultural and commercial affairs experienced a sad reverse during this time, it is more than probable that some were unable to perform their engagements. Yet the defalcations were so few as greatly to surprise the committee, and to call for devout thanksgiving to "the Author and Giver of all prosperity." The subscriptions actually received exceeded £216,000, which, with interest on the first instalment, and that which accrued pending the financial arrangements, placed £222,589 at the disposal of the committee.

Appropriation of the Fund.

The right appropriation of so large a sum involved the executive of the Centenary movement in serious responsibilities; increased by the fact, that the amount was so much more than was anticipated. The committee were, however, pledged to act on certain principles, which served, in a great degree, to direct their course in the embarrassment in which great success had placed them. It was a clearly admitted fact, that all this money had been subscribed with a religious object, and therefore ought to be devoted strictly to religious purposes. It was also agreed, from the beginning, that, in the appropriation, regard should be had to some permanent memorial or monumental erection, visible to Methodists, and to the world through all ages, as a memento of the estimation in which Methodists held Methodism at the first Centenary. It was a further condition that the Theological Institution and the Missions should have special prominence in any such monumental erections. These were the principal objects suggested; others were named as subsidiary, provided the means were sufficient to meet them.

The committee proceeded to the allocation of the funds in a meeting held at Liverpool, on Wednesday evening, July thirty-first, and, by adjournment, on the evening of August second. They adopted a series of resolutions, which recognised, with thanksgiving to God, the amount of subscriptions as, at that time, exceeding £200,000, of which £80,000 had been actually received. These resolutions appropriated to the Theological Institution, £27,500; the Centenary buildings and Missionary Society, £25,000; relief of distressed chapels, £18,500; better support of worn-out preachers, £8,100; erection of a Centenary monumental chapel in Dublin, £2,500; and the Wesleyan Education Committee, £2,500; in all £84,100.* These resolutions were submitted as the committee's report to the Conference of 1839. They called forth the cordial congratulations, and were sanctioned by the unanimous approbation, of that assembly, and were printed in the Minutes.

This Conference also directed, that the preachers of each Circuit, availing themselves of the help of the local preachers and officers of our Societies, should make and execute their own arrangements for the devotional celebration of the first complete Centenary of the "United Societies," as in other respects appointed last year. "The Conference recommends that the members and friends of our Societies throughout the Connexion unite in grateful and devout acknowledgment of the great and numerous blessings involved in the commencement and progress of Methodism, by holding simultaneous religious meetings, on Friday, October twenty-fifth, 1839; that early in the morning of that day

Arrange-
ments for the
Circuit
meetings.

* See the Resolutions, Appendix R. (Octavo "Minutes," 1839, p. 556.)

public prayer-meetings be held in all our principal chapels, and that a public religious service be held in the forenoon and evening, as usual on the Lord's day; and that any religious festival which it may be deemed expedient to provide for the poorer members of our Societies, and for the children taught in our Sunday and week-day schools, shall take place on the following Monday evening, October twenty-eighth."*

These recommendations were observed in every part of the Connexion; and the religious services, especially in regard of the poor and the children of the schools, formed a most delightful and edifying festival. Meanwhile the Centenary Committee pursued their labours with great diligence, and their proceedings secured the hearty approval of the Conferences of 1840 and 1841; until at length the large sum we have mentioned was realized, and the amended allocation of the amount was made, the details of which will be given hereafter. The general distribution may be stated in a note.†

The receipt of further subscriptions enabled the committee to allocate to the Theological Institution £2,000; to the Missionary Society a similar sum; to the Richmond Institution £900; and for that at Didsbury £300. A few further subscriptions were received, which left £1,081. 12s. 2d. in hand, subject to the balance due for printing

* Octavo "Minutes," vol. viii., p. 516.

	£.	s.	d.
† Wesleyan Theological Institution	71,609	19	1
Wesleyan Missionary Society.....	70,000	0	0
Centenary Chapel Relief Fund	38,736	0	10
Worn-out Ministers' and Widows' Relief Fund	16,264	8	3
Chapels in Ireland.....	7,415	2	7
Wesleyan Education	5,051	19	3
British and Foreign Bible Society	1,000	0	0

Reports; after which the residue was equally divided between the Missionary Society and the Theological Institution.*

The objects secured by these grants were all that the most sanguine expectations could hope for:—Two noble Institutions were provided. One at Richmond, Surrey, a beautiful structure capable of affording accommodation to sixty students, with suitable rooms for lectures, classes, and library; the two houses previously on the property affording suitable dwellings for the governor and tutors. At Didsbury, about six miles from Manchester, premises were also purchased, enlarged, and adapted for the reception of forty students, with dwellings for the governor and tutors; lecture hall and class rooms, library, and chapel. These establishments were fitted up with due regard to economy, but under such architectural direction as to render them what they were intended to be,—ornamental memorials of the progress and power of Methodism in 1839. The sum appropriated from the Centenary Fund to the Theological Institution was not only sufficient to provide, furnish, and fully prepare these two establishments for actual service, but to leave a surplus, as an endowment fund, of above twenty-six thousand pounds.

The importance of the objects secured by this Fund.

In seasons of depression, difficulty, and trial, it has been a question with some intelligent Wesleyans whether these two Institutions are not beyond the requirements of the Connexion. It is now certain and evident that all these surmisings are ill-founded and mistaken, and that in this, as in other instances, the directors of Wesleyan affairs have been providentially guided. Every year increases the range of Wesleyan influence in the world; and there is yet a

* See the detailed account, Appendix S,—Report of Centenary Fund.

vast unoccupied field, which we may hope will gradually be brought under Methodist cultivation. Already, by our Missions in the Southern hemisphere and other parts of the world, we see a demand for Methodist ministers growing up, which can only be supplied from the home Societies; and these can provide well qualified men only through the Institutions. No arrangement in the wide extent of Centenary liberality appears to us more wisely designed than the Theological Institutions.

The Missionary Society was also a prominent object with the subscribers to the Centenary Fund. The old Mission House in Hatton Garden had long been insufficient for the widely extended and increasing business of the Society; and the provision of suitable premises for this and other public business of the Connexion, was both desirable and necessary. The Institutions were beautifully designed and handsome structures; but, from the nature of the purpose to which they were devoted, they were in rural localities, far removed from general observation. Those whom business or inclination might lead to visit these places, would admire and read the lessons of Methodist influence they were calculated to teach; but such persons would be comparatively few. The Mission House, on the other hand, necessarily required to be in the business part of the metropolis, and would be open to public and continual observation. Happily, in the City of London Tavern, which stood in the broad part of Bishopsgate Street, the committee secured a site which enabled them to meet the wants of the Connexion, and at the same time to carry out the wishes of the Centenary subscribers. Extensive alterations and additions were made; and these being completed, the building was opened with religious services. This noble structure contains all the requisites for the trans-

action of missionary business, with ample accommodation for any general connexional purposes. It has, also, a large upper room suitable for public meetings, and withal presents a majestic architectural front, which can scarcely be passed without notice. It is, indeed, a noble monument of the Wesleyan Centenary, for which the sum of twenty-nine thousand four hundred and thirty-three pounds was appropriated.

Besides the Mission House, the Centenary subscribers were desirous of providing a ship, for the special use of the missionaries in the southern hemisphere; and six thousand pounds were applied to the purchase of the "Triton," a vessel considered very suitable for this service. This six thousand pounds covered the cost of the ship, and an ample supply of stores for three years. The Missionary Society was further assisted by a grant of five thousand pounds for the Mission Chapel Fund, another of six thousand pounds for Mission schools and school-houses in Ireland, two thousand pounds for the general purposes of the Society, and a moiety of the surplus, amounting to eleven thousand pounds, towards the liquidation of the Mission debt.

In connexion with the liberal devisings of the Centenary movement, there arose a deep conviction that some systematic and sufficient provision should be made for disabled ministers and ministers' widows. And as this could not be secured by any one grant, however large, other means (which we shall have to notice hereafter) were recommended to the Conference, to meet the case. The prospective operations of this New Auxiliary Fund rendered it necessary to provide the Missionary Society with means to make some additional allowances to missionaries who had lost their health on foreign Stations. In order to afford some per-

manent provision for such cases, a grant of ten thousand pounds was made by the Centenary Committee, and invested by the Missionary Committee for this especial purpose.

The case of disabled ministers and their widows was also carefully considered by the Centenary Committee. But their claims, although held to be deserving of much better provision than had hitherto been made for them, were not believed to form a legitimate demand on the Fund, inasmuch as they ought to be met by the living Church from year to year, and not by a large endowment. But as there was a debt on the existing fund for the relief of worn-out ministers, and as the measures intended for their permanent aid could not come into operation until 1841, a grant of nine thousand pounds was made to meet their case in the mean time, and of one thousand five hundred pounds to pay off the debt on the old fund. A grant of five thousand seven hundred pounds was also made to pay off a debt on Woodhouse Grove school premises, by which means one thousand pounds a year was released, and applied, as formerly, to the Preachers' Annuitant Society.

Ireland was not neglected in the appropriations of this Fund. In addition to what had been given through the Missionary Society, two thousand pounds, with the accruing interest, was given to the Irish Chapel Fund. And, as it was thought proper that some memorial building should be erected in that country to commemorate the Centenary of Methodism, five thousand pounds were appropriated for a Centenary chapel in Dublin.

A grant of five thousand pounds was made to the Education Committee, for the extension of day schools; and one thousand pounds to the Bible Society, as an expression of respect for the objects, principles, and exertions of that

Society, and as an acknowledgment of the assistance it has rendered our Missions.

In reviewing this movement, after a lapse of more than twenty years, it is impossible to overlook its perfectly Methodist character. Methodism did not arise from any bold, grand conception; it resulted from a simple, conscientious desire to do the will of God in the salvation of men. For this Wesley lived and laboured, and Methodism arose out of his godly, evangelical efforts. Such was the character of the Centenary operations. A committee met to devise the best and most religious means of recognising and commemorating the great goodness of God, in the preservation and continued extension of Methodism through a hundred years. Coæval with the first idea of this commemoration was the purpose to present a pecuniary thank-offering, as an expression of grateful love to God for His continued favour and blessing. But although, as a principle, this was thought just and right, there was no definite agreement as to its application. The Institution and the Missions were thought highly important and worthy objects; but what should be done for them, or what amount might reasonably be expected, no one could tell. The leading Methodists of that day, however, went to work *as Methodists*. They urged on themselves and others the religious duty of carefully estimating the great things which the Lord had done for them, and of presenting a suitable thank-offering to Him. There was no poll-tax, no rigid demand to wound the spirit of the pious poor, nothing to check, but everything to promote, the generous flow of religious gratitude. We have seen the result. The grateful heart of Methodism poured out an offering three-fold more than its intellectual head thought possible; affording a lesson to Methodist legislators which ought to operate through all future ages.

Thoroughly
Methodistic
character of
this move-
ment.

Remarkable
proportion
of the Fund
subscribed
by minis-
ters.

There is, however, one feature in this noble act of connexional liberality which ought not to be overlooked. The Wesleyan ministry at this day are not a well-paid clergy. In 1839 their case was worse than it is now. They were then very ill-paid; yet even at that time the Methodist preachers, for themselves and their families, contributed no mean portion of the whole Centenary Fund. The exact amount we do not know; but we have a list before us of nearly £18,000 subscribed by ministers; and we incline to think that nearly, if not quite, a tenth of the whole came from this source. We regard this as one of the noblest instances of general ministerial self-devotedness on record. Instances are even now fresh in our memory of the personal self-denial and family inconvenience which many of these ministerial offerings occasioned. These are noble facts, which, though honourable to the memory of several now in heaven, and equally so to others yet with us, may not be stated in detail. Of this we are assured, that this large ministerial contribution may and ought to * regarded as the exponent of an immense amount of piety, gratitude, and self-denial.

The practical results of this great movement were important. A few debts which pressed on some funds were removed. Two respectable collegiate establishments, capable of providing for one hundred students, were erected. A noble Mission House, with every accommodation for the transaction of the general business of the Connexion, was opened; and the various other means referred to were provided. All these taken together removed a host of obstacles, and afforded great facilities for the successful prosecution of Methodist operations. This is a very important feature of the case, and ought to be fully considered. The Centenary did not pass away in mere excite-

ment. Its results were not confined to holy delight or godly enthusiasm. It grappled with the stern realities of this temporal state, and elicited a contribution of nearly a quarter of a million sterling. Nor was this sum wasted in show, or spent for any transient object, but to provide means, on a large scale, for carrying out the great purposes of Wesley, by spreading scriptural holiness throughout the country; and giving an impulse to our missionary operations calculated to render them much more efficient in their aggression on the darkness and error of the heathen world.

Admonitory
influence of
the move-
ment.

The results of this effort are, indeed, calculated to inspire the bosom of every Wesleyan with high respect for his people, and the system with which he is connected; but they are also adapted to raise in every conscientious mind serious searchings of heart. We see the first century of Methodism beginning with Wesley, without money, or patronage, or power, other than that inspired by holy ardour and godly zeal. A hundred years pass away, and we find its numbers extended, their wealth increased, their influence felt throughout the world, and their progress crowned with all the glorious triumphs of this celebration.

Does not this issue of the first hundred years of our history lead us to ask, What will be the record of the second century? If, with such a beginning, this was the product of the first hundred years, what, from such a starting-point as was then reached, is to be the result of the second? Time flies; a new race of Wesleyan Methodists is rising up everywhere; does it not become us to take heed that we be worthy of our fathers? "The LORD God of your fathers make you a thousand times so many more as ye are, and bless you, as He hath promised you!"

CHAPTER IV.

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1839 TO THAT OF 1842.

The Conference of 1839: its transactions.

HAVING given a consecutive account of the Centenary movement, we resume the general history of the Connexion at the Liverpool Conference of 1839. The preliminary committees were well attended, but nothing in their proceedings calls for particular observation, until the Missionary Committee of Review brought the exciting subject of a heathen world's wants under special attention. When this meeting was told, that, to supply the vacancies occasioned by the failure of some missionaries' health, the death of others, and to meet in part the urgent applications the committee had received, it was absolutely necessary to send out immediately thirty-six additional missionaries, the announcement made a strong impression. This impression was increased by a letter from Mr. Freeman, missionary, stating that he had recently visited Coomassie, and that Ashantee was now open to missionary enterprise. A spirited conversation ensued, in which the necessity of enlarged efforts for increasing the Society's funds was recognised and enforced. Mr. Chappell, of Manchester, dwelt forcibly on "the worth of the soul," as sufficient to rouse a degree of Christian sympathy which, in very many Christian men, found no adequate representation in an annual subscription of twenty shillings. He proved to the meeting his estimation of the subject, by declaring that, instead of subscribing five pounds per annum to the Mis-

sions, as he had hitherto done, he should in future give fifty.

At the Institution Committee, the inadequacy of the premises at Hoxton to afford accommodation to the number of accepted candidates for the ministry was made fully apparent; and it was resolved to take another house in the neighbourhood, in order to prevent the necessity of many students going to lodge in different parts of the metropolis.

On the opening of the Conference, after the usual devotional services, and supplying the vacancies in the "Legal Hundred," the Rev. Theophilus Lessey was chosen president by a very large majority,—the first Wesleyan minister's son who attained that honour. The Rev. Robert Newton was re-appointed secretary, with a general concurrence bordering on unanimity. The thanks of the Conference were presented to the ex-president, for the able manner in which he had discharged the duties of his office during the year. This vote, which is sometimes a matter of mere routine, was on this occasion a subject of deep interest. The peculiar adaptation of President Jackson's mind and temper to the important and exciting scenes of the great Centenary movement, in which he had been called to act so conspicuous a part, was the theme of general remark. Dr. Beaumont expressed the universal judgment of preachers and people. "He had never seen the office of president better discharged,—with more heart, with more zeal, with more diligence, with more piety, with more wisdom, with more success. All who had witnessed his conduct on occasion of the Centenary meetings, could never forget the delightful and edifying manner in which he had conducted their proceedings. Those reminiscences of early Methodism, with which he had so deeply interested

them, were like apples of gold in baskets of silver." The vote of thanks was unanimously and enthusiastically adopted.

The Centenary sermon.

This being the appointed time for fully inaugurating the Centenary of Wesleyan Methodism, a day was set apart for the purpose of suitable religious services. On Monday morning, August fifth, the ex-president, appointed to that duty by the preceding Conference, preached the Centenary sermon. The service began at half-past ten. The Liturgy was first read by the president, after which Mr. Jackson preached from 1 Cor. i. 26-31. The sermon we need not characterize, as it was printed, and had an extensive circulation; it occupied in its delivery two hours and fifty-three minutes. The energy of the preacher was sustained throughout the whole service; his strength of voice was unimpaired; and, from first to last, "the unction of the Holy One" most eminently rested upon him. The impression produced on the congregation was of the highest order. Notwithstanding the extraordinary length of the discourse, it was heard with unbroken attention, overpowering interest, and delight.

In the evening, at six, the president preached from the sixteenth and seventeenth verses of the ninetieth Psalm. The entire discourse was eloquent and powerful, replete with large views and lofty anticipations. That part of it, more especially, which treated of the religious training of children, was eminently clear and convincing. Its effect upon the congregation sufficiently indicated that on this momentous subject thought and feeling were more than usually excited.

No account can convey any adequate idea of the proceedings of this day; but its hallowed services produced an impression of the most exciting and salutary

character upon thousands of persons ; and, on important connexional grounds, it is entitled to be regarded as a "high day" in the annals of Methodism to all generations.

Few questions in recent times have excited such deep and general religious concern as a proposal made by the then existing ministry. They proposed to devote a large grant of public money for general education, on the principle of admitting the children of the poorer classes of every religious denomination into the same school, including even the children of Roman Catholics, and sanctioning the employment of their version of the Scriptures for the purpose of giving them religious instruction. This plan was regarded by almost every religious denomination, except Papists and Socinians, as impracticable and dangerous.

Plan of
public
education
proposed by
government.

The subject had previously excited considerable attention in the Connexion. The Minute of the Committee of Council on Education had been introduced into the meeting of the London District in the month of May. The plan was regarded as so highly objectionable and alarming, especially that part of it which contemplated the introduction of Romish versions of the Scriptures into schools to be supported by public money, that the District Meeting requested the Education Committee, as the body charged with the duty of watching over this department by the Conference, to take the whole subject into its immediate and careful consideration. In order that it might be discussed in a manner commensurate with its importance, they invited the London members of the Committee for guarding the privileges of the Connexion, the preachers of the London Circuits, and other friends known to be inter-

ested in the religious education of the poor, to aid them in their deliberations.

Its highly objectionable character.

A numerous and highly respectable meeting was held, the President of the Conference in the chair, on the twenty-first of May, when a series of resolutions was passed, deprecating the government scheme, and calling upon the Wesleyan Societies and congregations throughout the kingdom to petition against it. The exception which Dr. Beaumont took to the vote of thanks to the President, referred to his conduct in this movement; but the unanimity and enthusiasm with which that vote was carried, showed that Mr. Jackson's conduct was fully approved by his brethren generally. This was further confirmed by the action of the Conference. The question was propounded, "What is the judgment of the Conference with respect to the measures which were adopted by the London united committees to promote petitions against the grant of public money in support of the plans of education proposed by the recently appointed Committee of Privy Council?" The answer was, "The Conference, in its deliberate judgment, resolves, that the occasion, which especially called for vigilant and active exertions, constituted a full and perfect justification of the proceedings in question." This judgment was elaborated in clear and logical argument. The Committees were thanked for their "wise and Christian exertions," and encouraged to exercise a vigilant watch over this great national and religious question. As these Committees are appointed by the Conference, and their acts must pass in review before that assembly, it was declared highly improper for any preacher, previous to such review, to pass any public opinion on the action of such committees: and such conduct was positively prohibited.

The discussions respecting the appropriation of the Cen-

tenary Fund raised the question of devising some more efficient relief for disabled preachers of the Connexion, and the widows of deceased ministers. This led to a resolution by the Centenary Committee, that some measure should be devised, "upon the principle of the Children's Fund." As all the resolutions of this Committee were adopted by the next Conference, this recommendation was fully recognised and admitted.

Plan for making permanent provision for worn-out ministers.

The general Centenary Committee appointed by the Conference of 1838, to meet in October of that year, made this subject a prominent part of their deliberations; and, after considerable discussion, appointed a sub-committee to devise a plan for making permanent provision for supernumeraries and preachers' widows throughout the Connexion. At a meeting of the general Centenary Committee, held in February, 1839, this plan was presented, and, with various modifications, unanimously approved. To prevent the loss of a year, and to comply fully with an existing rule,* the revised plan was sent to the several District Committees to be considered at their annual meetings in the ensuing May. Every District Meeting approved the scheme, and it was very generally regarded as the best that could be devised.

Having passed through these preliminary stages, the measure was submitted to the Conference, and finally adopted as a permanent institution of the Connexion. It made provision for supernumerary preachers on a graduated scale, according to the number of years they had been

* It was enacted by the Conference of 1815, "That no new proposal which is designed to effect a general augmentation of the income of the preachers in the Connexion at large, shall be definitely adopted as a rule, until it shall have received the assent of a majority of the District Meetings throughout the kingdom."

engaged in the ministry, and for each preacher's widow, according to the time her husband had been so engaged. It required a yearly collection in the classes; every Circuit being held responsible for an amount equal to sixpence per member, according to the returns at the preceding Conference. The whole plan* was carefully arranged, and well adapted to remove a great defect and serious evil from the Connexion. The previous practice, which, in some instances, induced a disabled and afflicted preacher, who had spent a large portion of his life as a diligent and devoted minister of the Gospel, by petty trading to eke out a precarious subsistence, was an injustice to the man, and a disgrace to the Church which allowed it.

Mr. Daniel
O'Connell's
attack on
Methodism
repelled.

Public attention was now directed to Wesley's character, and to Methodism, by a man who had already made himself very prominent in the political affairs of the day. Provoked, in all probability, by the sound Protestant influence which Methodism exerted with so much energy in checking the progress of Popery in Ireland, and in opposing the Popish tendencies of the government in England, Daniel O'Connell made a violent attack on Wesley and Methodism, in letters published in the Manchester newspapers. Our limits will not allow us to give even an outline of the controversy which this attack occasioned; we will content ourselves by quoting the remarks of a journal of the greatest circulation and power, and one never particularly favourable to Methodism. "The Times," in referring to this outrage of O'Connell, said, "Of all his libels, the most injudicious and unlucky for himself has been his attack on the Wesleyans. Their numbers, their intelligence, their religious earnestness, and their moral character, make their

* Appendix T,—The Plan. (Octavo "Minutes," vol. viii., pp. 552-6.)

character impregnable to the modern league of Popery and Socinianism, of which he would fain be accounted the leader. Mr. Cubitt, a clergyman of the Wesleyan ministry, has taken him in hand; and with a moderation and decorum which, being in harmony with the clerical character, are of course in strong contrast with the style of Mr. O'Connell, has demonstrated the learned gentleman's measureless ignorance of ecclesiastical history, and of theology in general; and has exposed him to his own Popish friends and clients as a terrible blunderer, intending infinite injury to society at large, but doing real mischief only to his priests and partisans. With respect to all that part of Mr. O'Connell's newspaper invective against the Wesleyans, which is devoted to the misrepresentation of their opinions on the general subject of liberty, civil and religious, Mr. Cubitt, employing the same channel of publication, has contented himself with a simple denial of the agitator's illiberal and groundless imputations; but with respect to the character of John Wesley, whom Mr. O'Connell has had the effrontery to accuse of having been a promoter of arbitrary and intolerant doctrines, and a direct accessory to the London riots of Lord George Gordon, in 1780, Mr. Cubitt has appealed specifically to contemporary facts and dates, which triumphantly vindicate the memory of the venerable founder of his faith, and which add one more to the thousand already accumulated exposures of Popish imposture and calumny.But there is no portion of Mr. Cubitt's answer more deserving of general attention than his reference to those liberal disclaimers which we frequently hear from individuals of the Roman Catholic creed. To those individuals, in proportion to the respectability of each man's personal character, we are ready to give all due credit for sincerity, good faith, and moderation. But these Popish professors

of freedom and tolerance must be regarded as the exceptions, not the exemplifications, of their class. Mr. Cubitt says, most reasonably, 'We take your Church as *a whole*. You claim unchangeableness and infallibility, and you must take the consequences.' 'You talk about religious liberty, but what says your spiritual sovereign? It is time that a stand were at length made, and many think so who were sincerely in your favour in the momentous struggle of 1829.' 'You have only given us a clearer insight into the nature of Popery, and a more extended acquaintance with its objects and plans. The result is, that we like it worse than ever.'.....In the sentiments of this conscientious and able minister, the Protestant Christians of Great Britain do now, almost universally, concur." Cubitt, however, was not the only Wesleyan minister who encountered the political assailant. The Rev. D. M'Afee addressed a series of crushing letters to him, repelling his slanders and exposing his sophistries, with an effect which O'Connell never ceased to feel.

A branch of the Institution opened at Abney House.

The resolution of the Conference to take other premises, for the purpose of affording instruction to a greater number of candidates for the ministry, was carried into effect, in September, 1839. Situated at Stoke Newington, in a beautiful and salubrious vicinity, and celebrated as the residence for thirty-six years of the justly eminent Dr. Watts, Abney House afforded accommodation for about thirty students. This branch Institution was placed under the care of the Rev. John Farrar, as governor and classical tutor, and the theological chair was filled by Dr. Hannah. This wise arrangement temporarily met a very urgent necessity. Previously several of the young men lodged in private houses, in different parts of London, and were consequently deprived, to some extent, of the paternal oversight of the governor, and exposed in various ways, to

many temptations. All these defects were removed, and by the opening of Abney House suitable accommodation was provided under the care of a minister every way calculated to promote their spiritual interests, and to afford them the means of mental culture.

The Conference was held at Newcastle-on-Tyne, for the first time, in 1840. The Societies in that town and neighbourhood, where Methodism at an early period of its history obtained firm footing, and where it had for many years exercised a powerful influence, rejoiced greatly that they were to be honoured with the annual assembly of Wesleyan ministers. The necessary arrangements were made with great spirit and unanimity, and the preliminary committees were well attended.

The Conference of 1840: its proceedings.

This was the first year that grants from the new Auxiliary Fund came into operation. The urgent need for this righteous measure is proved by the fact, that one hundred and seventy supernumerary preachers, and two hundred preachers' widows, in England and Ireland, were proved to have just claims to the annual grants. These, with the usual allowances for the education of the children of supernumerary preachers and widows, and for incidental expenses, were found to amount to about twelve thousand pounds.

At the Missionary Committee of Review, Dr. Bunting stated, that the executive committee had gone to the extreme limit of their means in supplying missionaries to meet the wants of the heathen; and that, unless the regular funds of the Society were augmented, they could appoint no additional ministers to the foreign work. The Rev. T. B. Freeman, who had penetrated to Coomassie, gave an intensely interesting account of his journey from

Cape Coast to this capital of Ashanti, accompanied with most affecting details of the barbarous and degraded condition of its people. The case was of such terrible and pressing necessity, that Dr. Bunting said, that, although the Committee had a great objection to special contributions, as calculated to injure the regular resources of the Society, they were compelled to regard the Ashanti Mission as of such a very extraordinary character, that it was proposed to raise a special fund of five thousand pounds for its maintenance for three years. This announcement was received with applause. It was hoped that, at the expiration of the three years, the Society would have recovered from its embarrassments. The difficulty of conducting the missionary operations with the limited means then provided was very great; so great, indeed, that Dr. Bunting closed his address with the words, "We are at our means' end, and at our wits' end; and we want your money and your wits."

When the Conference opened, the president, the Rev. Theophilus Lessey, was absent through illness. The Rev. Thomas Jackson was called to officiate until the election of a new president. After filling up the vacancies in the Legal Hundred, the Rev. Robert Newton was, by a large majority, placed in the chair, and the Rev. Dr. Hannah elected secretary. The illness of the late president led the Conference to resolve as a permanent arrangement, "That in order to provide against the difficulties and inconveniences which may result from the continued affliction of the president of the Conference, in every such case the regulation which was made in the year 1816, for the case of a president's dying during the year of his presidency, shall be applied according to the extent and duration of the exigency;" that is to say, on receiving notice from

the president of his inability, through indisposition, to discharge the duties of his office, "the last surviving president shall be considered as having all the powers, privileges, and authorities of the presidency, and as responsible for all its duties." In consequence of the illness of the president, Dr. Dixon preached the official sermon, and Dr. Hannah delivered the charge to the ministers received into full connexion. Fifty-four young ministers were ordained, including the Rev. John H. James and Samuel R. Hall.

This Conference had to conduct a painful and laborious investigation into the conduct pursued by certain leading members of the Wesleyan Societies in Canada, since their union with the British Missions in 1833. For some years the union appeared to produce very satisfactory results. At length, however, some of the leading Canadian ministers virtually superseded the president of the Upper Canada Conference, and the committee of which he was the chairman, by independently, and without his knowledge, communicating on connexional matters with the Governor. In various other ways, also, these persons conducted themselves in a manner greatly at variance with the proceedings of the British Conference, and with the principles which it had always maintained. All, however, would probably have been endured, but for the outbreak of a violent revolution in those provinces in 1839. In the great excitement which this sad event occasioned, the "Christian Guardian," a newspaper conducted by the Canada Wesleyans, avowed principles, and advocated a course of political action, altogether alien from the principles maintained by the British Conference. This departure from the principles of English Methodism was so evident and important, that Lord John Russell, then secretary of state for the colonial

Unsatisfactory state of the Methodist Societies in Canada.

department, ordered a communication to be made to one of the missionary secretaries. The subject was therefore forced on the notice of the Conference.

The Rev. Egerton Ryerson and the Rev. William Ryerson attended the Conference as representatives from the Canada Societies, and the whole subject was considered. A large mass of documents, twenty-five in number, was first read; the representatives were heard at great length, and every method that could be thought of was taken in various successive meetings to obtain a full exposition of the whole case. The committee presented their report to the Conference. The Messrs. Ryerson immediately desired a copy, and, after fully considering it, they frankly declared their opinion, that the Upper Canada Conference, which they represented, would never accede to the views which it contained, and concerning which such serious misunderstandings had arisen; and that the maintenance of such views on the part of the British Conference would be regarded as a virtual dissolution of the union.

Dissolution
of the union
with the
Canadian
Conference.

The Conference was therefore reluctantly led to the conviction, that the union established in 1833 could not be perpetuated. In this conclusion, it was remembered, that pacific resolutions submitted to the late Canadian Conference were negatived by a large majority, and that, according to the testimony of the Messrs. Ryerson, the same disposition remained. It was, therefore, only necessary to devise means for carrying out the inevitable separation in a religious manner, that no unchristian feeling might be engendered; and, wishing each other "all spiritual blessings," they might mutually cherish such sentiments of sincere Christian friendship as became two important and independent portions of the Church of Christ.

A special committee was invested with full authority to

act in all matters connected with the subject until the next Conference, and especially to take measures, in conjunction with the general Missionary Committee, for the future prosecution of our work in the united province of Canada; and of our Missions among the aborigines and destitute settlers. This committee had power to increase its number, and to appoint, from among themselves, such sub-committees as they might think desirable. Resolutions were unanimously adopted for carrying these decisions into practical effect.*

The visit of the Rev. Robert Newton to America led to some mention of the subject of slavery at this Conference, and to the insertion of a special notice in the Minutes. Soon after Newton's return, rumours were heard in England that he had refused, while in that country, to bear any testimony against the evil and sinful character of slavery. The author had the report conveyed to him immediately by the secretary of the Anti-Slavery Society, with the assurance that it was certainly true. Pained at hearing such a statement respecting a minister whose character and principles we thoroughly admired, we took an opportunity, a short time afterward, when Mr. Newton was our guest, to inquire into the case. We well remember with what emphasis he made a statement to the following effect. "While in the north, I was more than once importuned to speak strongly against slavery as it existed in the Southern States; but I thought it more consistent with my Christian duty to reprove the defects of the persons with whom I then was, than to rebuke the criminality of the absent. I accordingly said, that, much as I abhorred slavery, I did not mean to pronounce any condemnation on it whilst with them." "I cannot," he said, "condemn slavery in the presence of men

Slavery in the American Methodist Churches. Mr. Newton and the British Conference.

* Appendix U. ("Minutes," 1840, p. 128.)

who are perpetrating an injustice equally abhorrent to Christian feeling, although it may not be productive of so much positive misery. I will not denounce slavery in the presence of men who will not go to the Lord's table in company with a Christian brother, nor allow him to sit in the same public conveyance with them; but proscribe him under the influence of a cruel and merciless caste, merely on account of the colour of his skin." "If I were a coloured person," added Mr. Newton, "I scarcely know which fate I should prefer, to be a slave in the South, or to be reputed a freeman in the North, and yet to have my manhood trodden down, and my feelings lacerated every hour, by the cruel ban under which those of African blood in every degree are doomed to suffer." It was for the utterance of such manly and Christian sentiments as these, that Robert Newton was blamed by those who writhed under his reproofs; and hence the circulation of the reports to which allusion has been made.

But if Robert Newton abstained for prudential reasons, on some occasions, from bearing a decided testimony against the evils of slavery, at others he spoke out clearly and fully. "I told them," said he, on his return, "that with us slavery was universally denounced as a great evil, and a great crime; that I believed there was not a man either in the British or Irish Conferences, who would say anything else concerning it; and that I was charged by you to say, that it was your earnest wish and desire that they should maintain, from year to year, their own testimony against it, as given in their Book of Discipline; and that they would unite with their fellow-citizens in such measures as might be deemed prudent and necessary to promote the abolition of slavery." This explicit declaration of the views held on this important subject by British Methodists

induced the ministers of America, in the ensuing Address from the Methodist Episcopal Church of that country to the British Conference, to speak with unusual explicitness respecting slavery. They plainly intimated in this document, that they had no intention of altering the testimony borne against slavery in their Book of Discipline. But it was at the same time intimated, that the laws of the several States composing the Union were regarded as of paramount authority in civil matters, and should not be interfered with by ecclesiastical bodies. And as in some States the majority of the people, and the tendency of the laws, are in favour of abolition; while in others the very promulgation of abolitionist views and doctrines is regarded as a species of high treason; each State being independent of each other, and of the whole body, in this matter; the Conference seemed to be of opinion, that, so far as *they* were concerned, each should be left to pursue its own course. They, therefore, abstained from giving any further expression of their collective opinion on the subject; and they thought that their policy on this question was in accordance with those scriptures which enjoin respect to civil governments, as well as with those which show that a state of slavery was permitted to exist in the Churches of the New Testament. These sentiments were decidedly opposed to those entertained by the British Conference, and were received with great concern. In other respects the Address was satisfactory, and gave a cheering account of the progress of Methodism in the United States.

Notwithstanding the general prosperity of the Missions, the Connexion had to lament some very painful visitations. In November, intelligence reached the Mission House of the death, by drowning, of the Rev. John H. Bumby, the general superintendent of the New Zealand District. We

Death of the
Rev. J. H.
Bumby.

have already spoken of this excellent man, as a minister of deep piety and superior intellectual powers, which were devoted to the evangelization of the heathen, with exemplary diligence and zeal. But his missionary career was short. Having visited some of the southern stations of his District, he was returning to the principal one at the Hokianga. Crossing the Bay of Thames in a native canoe, the frail vessel was upset, and Bumby, with twelve natives, found a watery grave. He was the first missionary who died on the New Zealand Mission.

Disasters in
the Tonga
Mission.

At the same time, the missionary secretaries were informed of the suspension of the Mission at Tonga. The Gospel had been successfully preached to the natives of those islands; many had been truly converted, and others brought under religious influence. But the heathen part of the population repeatedly evinced a disposition to persecute and destroy the Christians. To such an extent were these annoyances and threats carried, that they were compelled to erect a fort for their protection. At length, this persecuting spirit broke out into open aggression; and the Revs. Charles Tucker and Stephen Rabone, with their wives and families, were obliged to fly for their lives, and take refuge in the Christian fort. Just at this crisis, H.M.S. "Favourite" appeared off the island; and the missionaries sent a letter to the captain, informing him of their perilous circumstances, and requesting him to afford them protection. Captain Croker immediately landed with a number of armed men, and proceeded to the head-quarters of the heathen party, with the humane intention of effecting a reconciliation between them and the native Christians. To the surprise of the captain, he found that the heathens had a strong fortification, surrounded by a moat, filled with water forty feet

wide. The place had the appearance of having been constructed by persons acquainted with engineering, there being regular loop-holes for musketry; while the entrance was guarded by a carronade. Some Europeans were associated with the heathens: and one of them, long known in the island by the significant name of "Jemmy the Devil," took an active part in the negotiation which ensued.

Captain Croker endeavoured to convince them of the desirableness and advantages of peace, and proposed that both parties should destroy their forts, and live in amity. For a time he hoped that his mediation would be successful; but, impatient of the delay which took place, he ordered a musket or two to be fired, for the purpose of intimidation. This unfortunate step, however, produced the opposite result. The carronade was immediately discharged, accompanied by a heavy fire of musketry, by which the captain and two other officers were killed, and the first lieutenant and nineteen men wounded. Lieutenant Dunlop shortly afterward ordered his men to retire, and, returning to the spot where the missionaries and their families were, took them on board the "Favourite," and conveyed them in safety to the neighbouring island of Vavau.

It was, however, very gratifying to the Society to be informed, at the time that this afflictive intelligence was conveyed to them, that no blame attached to the missionaries. On the arrival of the "Favourite" at Sydney, the Rev. Messrs. M'Kenny and Orton waited on Sir George Gipps, the governor, by whom they were introduced to the surviving officers, who minutely detailed all the particulars of the painful events, and cordially bore their united testimony to the judicious and Christian conduct of Tucker and Rabone, in the very critical and trying circumstances

in which they were placed by the fury of their heathen persecutors.

Although this sad intelligence was left to exercise its depressing influence for a considerable period, until the arrival of further information from those remote islands, the suspension of the Tonga Mission continued but for a few weeks. The missionaries, having placed their wives and families in safety, were anxious to face any danger to resume their charge. Mr. Tucker, with Mr. Thomas, the chairman of the District, returned to Tonga, about three weeks after he had left it, when the chiefs agreed to desist from further hostilities. Mrs. Tucker shortly rejoined her husband. Soon afterwards, the Rev. John Waterhouse, general superintendent of the Australian and Polynesian Missions, visited Tonga. His zealous efforts of mediation were very useful, and tended to promote a much better feeling among the chiefs.

The spiritual results of this Mission were very satisfactory. Three hundred natives had experienced the saving power of the truth, and two hundred others were candidates for admission into Church fellowship. The schools were also reported in a very satisfactory state; the labours of Mrs. Tucker in this department being most praiseworthy and successful.

Death of
the Rev.
Theophilus
Lessey.

The Rev. Theophilus Lessey, president of the Conference in 1839, was removed from the church militant to eternal rest, by a peaceful and triumphant death, on the tenth of June, 1841. This eminent minister was born at Penzance; his father being a Methodist minister stationed on that Circuit. The child was presented to God, in baptism, by the venerable Founder of Methodism,* and grew up into manhood under the combined influence of

* It is supposed, in Wesley's last visit to that county, in September, 1787.

godly parental teaching, and manifold divine visitations, which led him early "to know the God of his father, and to serve Him with a perfect heart and with a willing mind." Soon after he was sixteen he was truly converted to God, became a local preacher, and, after the usual course of examination, was received into the ministry. His father entertained apprehensions that his constitutional sensitiveness and timidity would prevent an efficient discharge of the duties of this sacred office; but his course, from its beginning to its close, was one of continual and brilliant progress. His extreme sensitiveness and diffidence, indeed, remained, and were always apparent; but his soul was so richly imbued with the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, and his well-directed and vigorous understanding so devoted to the prime object of his calling, that he attained an eminent position as a preacher. In unfolding the deep things of God, and leading believers to the attainment of high religious experience, he was singularly successful.

His elevation to the highest position in the Connexion seemed but the prelude to a long course of affliction. Soon after the Conference of 1839, he was taken ill, and suffered in different degrees for nearly two years. His mind was peaceful and happy. He apprehended the atonement of his Saviour, and rested there. "I am," he would say, "just now at the mercy-seat. I am casting myself there. It is my place of refuge; my only refuge. *Precious* atonement! the sinner's hope. O for more of God!" Yet, although his illness was long, he died suddenly. He had expressed the earnest desire of his heart in the well-known couplet:—

"And when Thou sendest, Lord, for ME,
O let the messenger be LOVE!"

and shortly afterward, from the rupture of a blood-vessel in the lungs, he passed away to his heavenly inheritance.

William
Dawson.

William Dawson, of Barnbow, near Leeds, was removed from the scene of his earthly labours on the morning of the fifth of June, 1841. His relation to Methodism, and the devotion of his whole time and strength to the services of the Connexion, under the arrangement made for that purpose a few years before, have been already mentioned. His death was unexpected and very sudden. He had gone to Colne, on his way to preach the anniversary sermons of the Bradford Juvenile Missionary Society, a service which he had performed annually during twenty years. On his arrival, accompanied by a friend, he did not appear quite well; but he did not complain. He conversed on various subjects in his usual cheerful and pleasant manner, and joined in singing several hymns. After a light supper, and praying with the family, he retired to rest, and appears to have slept well until about two o'clock in the morning. He then called his friend, saying, "I am poorly." The family and medical aid were soon in attendance; but all was unavailing. Removed from the bed, he sat in a chair, and began to repeat the verse:—

" Let us, in life and death,
Thy steadfast truth declare ; "

but he could not finish it. Folding his arms across his breast, as he frequently did in the pulpit, he expired within about twenty minutes from the time that he called his friend.

Mr. Dawson was, undoubtedly, the most eminent lay preacher that ever appeared in Methodism. For thirty years he attracted congregations as large, while his discourses and addresses excited as much interest, as those

of the most talented and popular ministers of any denomination. "He possessed," says a highly respectable journal, on noticing his death, "a strong and highly original order of mind; was deeply imbued with the urgency of the Gospel message; delivered that message to listening crowds with earnestness and power; roused the slumbering conscience, laid open the inmost recesses of the human heart; and, with an energy and freshness peculiar to himself, he freely proclaimed the glad tidings of salvation. Mr. Dawson possessed a noble and generous mind, with an equally catholic spirit; and his whole character was as transparent as the light, and warm as the sun's own ray; and although not an educated man in the strictest sense of the term, much less refined, yet he possessed, along with strong manly sense and a vigorous intellect, striking originality, and a rich power of conception, which, although not free from occasional eccentricity, bespoke the man of true genius. His discourses evinced an intimate acquaintance with the fathers and the best English divines. His was no mere meretricious oratory; but his eloquence was genuine, and always of the right sort. 'He spoke from the heart, and to the heart.' In the pulpit, or on the platform, he was equally at home; and, from both these elevations, he has often poured out some of the most stirring passages of Christian eloquence that it has been our privilege to listen to."

In the death of William Dawson, Wesleyan Methodism, throughout its wide extent, felt it had sustained a heavy loss: "a prince and a great man fell" in our Israel. It is not surprising, therefore, that a large number, who were within reach of the place of his interment, showed their high respect for the character of their departed friend by crowding to his funeral. Such a scene has been seldom witnessed.

An immense concourse assembled. The funeral procession was formed by Methodist ministers and office-bearers; then followed gentlemen on horseback; afterward the hearse, followed by three mourning coaches: sixty-eight other carriages of different sorts closed the melancholy cortège.

The Conference of 1841: its transactions.

The Conference of 1841 assembled at Manchester, and, as usual, held its sittings in Oldham Street chapel. The preparatory committees were well attended, and their deliberations marked by great unanimity; but their proceedings exhibited no point of particular interest, except those of the Missionary Committee of Review. In the summary Report which was read, it was clearly shown that, although the receipts of the Society during the past year had exceeded ninety thousand pounds, they had fallen short of the expenditure above nineteen thousand; while the entire debt on the Society, at the close of 1840, was more than thirty thousand pounds. In these circumstances, the committee felt compelled to call on the Connexion for greatly enlarged supplies; or, failing this, to reduce their expenditure by diminishing their missionary agency. The meeting unanimously repudiated the latter alternative, and resolved on prosecuting a fresh canvass of the Connexion, in the hope of increasing the liberality of the people, and improving the financial receipts of the Society.

The Committee of the Centenary Fund reported further receipts, amounting to twenty thousand pounds, which was appropriated according to the previous arrangement. This made the whole amount received and appropriated one hundred and ninety thousand pounds. There were considerable sums yet to be received; and, as all the other

purposes contemplated in the formation of the fund had been met, it was unanimously resolved, that whatever might be further realized should be equally divided between the Missions and the Institution.

The Committee of the Theological Institution reported, that there were thirty students at Hoxton, twenty-five at Abney House, and five in private residences; that very eligible premises for the northern branch had been obtained at Didsbury, near Manchester, where alterations were being carried out, to provide for forty students; that a very desirable house and grounds had been purchased on Richmond Hill, where the necessary erections were to be made for the southern branch of the Institution; and that both these were in such a state of forwardness as to warrant the expectation that they would be ready for occupation in September, 1842.

On the opening of the Conference, the Rev. James Dixon was elected president, and the Rev. Dr. Hannah secretary. The charge of the ex-president to the newly ordained ministers produced a deep impression, and raised even Robert Newton in the estimation of all who heard him, for all the high qualities of Christian eloquence. His "breathing" thoughts and "burning" words, animated alike by the inspirations of true genius and genuine religion, commanded universal admiration.

The Conference adopted the Report of the Committee of Education, and published it in the Minutes as the plan of education to be acted on in future. It is a clear and comprehensive statement of the functions of the General Committee of Education; and exhibits the principles on which Wesleyan schools are to be conducted, their government, means of support, character of teachers,

and every other important particular connected with their management.

Further reference was, also, made to the state of Methodism in Canada. At the last Conference, a committee had been appointed with full powers to take the most judicious and Christian measures, in conjunction with the Rev. Egerton Ryerson and the Rev. William Ryerson, for preventing the dissolution of the union previously subsisting between the British Missions and the Canadian Societies from producing any bitter or improper feelings. That Committee now reported that the contemplated consultations had been prevented by the precipitate departure of the Messrs. Ryerson from England. The Conference also considered the Address of the Upper Canada Conference of 1841, with other documents relating to that province, and was led fully to confirm the dissolution of the union formerly subsisting between the two sections of Methodism in that country.

The Minutes also inform us, that the Conference had its attention officially directed to a work published in the preceding year, entitled "Wesleyan Takings: or, Centenary Sketches of Ministerial Character, as exhibited in the Wesleyan Connexion during the first hundred Years of its Existence." Of this book the Minute says, "The Conference hereby expresses its pain and grief that such a book should ever have been published. It strongly disapproves of the general spirit and tendency of the book itself, as calculated to injure the spiritual interests of our people, and to diminish the proper influence and beneficial effects of the Christian ministry as an ordinance of God."

We do not deem it necessary, in this place, to discuss the origin and object of the work so censured; but we cordially, and fully concur in the judgment which

the Conference pronounced. Such an exhibition of the peculiar mental and physical characteristics of living ministers, including their frailties, defects, and eccentricities, was certainly likely to inflict serious injury on the persons "taken," and to damage the devotional feelings and religious spirit of those who read this very questionable book.

Several regulations of a practical character were enjoined. It was strongly recommended that invitations should not be given to preachers before the March Quarterly Meetings; and it was declared, that no invitations or correspondence respecting Stations taking place earlier would be recognised by the Stationing Committee. It was also resolved, that it be a standing order, that the persons by whom the Conference shall confer ordination to our ministry by imposition of hands, be the president, ex-president, and secretary of the Conference for the time being, with two of the senior preachers, to be nominated by the president. Proper books were ordered to be provided for the registration of baptisms, and various regulations were made respecting the list of reserve, connexional schedules, District Meetings, and other matters of detail.

We cannot pass from the proceedings of this Conference without alluding to its deliberation on a subject not mentioned in the Minutes, but which was generally known at the time, and excited considerable interest. In the preceding year two Methodist ministers had appeared in their pulpits in gowns, after the manner of ministers of the Established Church, and the clergymen of some other denominations. This conduct was regarded as so likely to produce dissension, that the case was referred by the Conference to a committee, which considered the question, and reported thereon. The Conference received and confirmed

Debate in
Conference
on preachers
wearing
gowns.

their report, but it was not published. One who was present says, "The general question, as such, although unavoidably noticed in discussing the individual cases, was never formally and regularly debated in the Conference. On this subject there were three parties in the Conference itself: one, eager to state and to plead all that could be urged in favour of sacerdotal vestments, and that partly on the ground of utility, and partly on the principle that it was right and seasonable to assert openly our claims, as Christian ministers, to the use of the ministerial costume; another, equally ready and disposed to contend against such vestments as inconsistent with the simple and spiritual character of Methodism, and as a supposed approximation toward the Establishment; but a third and far larger party, considering questions about official vestments ridiculously insignificant in comparison with the peace of our numerous Societies, was averse to the irritating tendencies of a full debate on the principle of the subject in dispute; and rejoiced to escape from the anxiety and mischief of the whole matter, by concurring in the unanimous wish of the committee, as communicated to the Conference by its chairman, Dr. Newton, to the effect that, without raising the question, whether, or to what extent, our existing rules sanction or prohibit the use of the gown, and without making any positive rule on the subject, it should be an implicit understanding that no preacher should minister in a gown, without the direct sanction of the Conference." Thus the vexed question was set at rest, and it is devoutly hoped that its repose may never be disturbed.

Death of the
Rev. Joseph
Entwisle.

The venerable and highly respected Joseph Entwisle was removed from the church militant on Sunday the fourteenth of November, 1841. This truly eminent minister had been twice President of the Conference, and was the first

House Governor and Chaplain of the Theological Institution. The duties of these important and highly responsible offices he discharged with great credit to himself and benefit to the Connexion. As President, he evinced a firm and uniform fidelity, united with all the meekness and gentleness of the Christian character: he was in very deed the first among brethren. As Governor of the Institution, he acted as a father towards his sons in the Gospel. In 1838 the infirmities of increasing years induced him to retire from the duties of active life. He then settled in Tadcaster, where he presented a beautiful spectacle of happy old age, and continued to run his godly race, until he suddenly, but triumphantly, reached the goal, and obtained the prize. For the last three weeks of his life, he suffered from a severe cough, the effects of a cold; but this did not seem to interfere seriously with his general health. He was still able to minister the word of God without any particular inconvenience, and even with more than his usual energy. On Sunday evening, October thirty-first, he preached with uncommon power and unction; and on the following day conducted the missionary prayer-meeting at the same place. On Tuesday he complained of strange emotions in his chest: but he preached again on Wednesday and Thursday with remarkable power. He retired to rest about half-past nine on the Saturday evening, and about ten his son-in-law heard him open the door and call "Mary" (his daughter). Mrs. Dalby and her husband were instantly with him, and found him coughing violently. Mrs. Dalby inquired whether she could do any thing for him, to which he feebly replied, "No, my dear;" and shortly after ceased to breathe. He appeared to be labouring under a feeling of suffocation; but he was unconscious, and in a few minutes his spirit

passed away. So peaceful and gentle was the departure, that the precise moment could not be ascertained. His death, though comparatively sudden, was but "a soft transition" to endless bliss.

Successful
result of the
special effort
to increase
the mission-
ary income.

In accordance with the resolutions of the Missionary Committee, and the decisions of the Conference, special deputations were appointed to visit the most important Districts in the autumn of 1841. These efforts were very useful. The ordinary receipts of the Society for Great Britain and Ireland were, in the year ending December thirty-first, 1840, sixty-nine thousand and seventy pounds; but in the following year they amounted to seventy-five thousand eight hundred and forty-nine pounds, and in the next to seventy-seven thousand six hundred and fifty-one pounds. The pressing necessities of the case were also felt abroad; and the gross income of the Society was raised from the amount in 1840 of ninety thousand one hundred and eighty-two pounds, to one hundred and one thousand six hundred and eighty-eight pounds in 1841, and to one hundred and one thousand one hundred and eighty-seven pounds in 1842. But even this large increase was not of itself sufficient; for the expenditure of 1840 was one hundred and nine thousand two hundred and twenty-seven pounds, and the balance of debt at the end of that year, of thirty-nine thousand nine hundred and sixteen pounds, being an increase of debt, during the year, of nineteen thousand and forty-five pounds. It was, therefore, necessary, in addition to this increase of income, to diminish the expenditure. This was done so judiciously and effectually, that at the end of the following year the whole debt was paid off, and the general treasurers had a balance in hand of two thousand nine hundred and thirty-three pounds. An important part of what, in this account, appears as a reduction of

expenditure, was, in reality, an increase of income. It resulted from successful endeavours in many Mission Stations to raise, by local contributions, a larger proportion of the amount required for the support of the missionaries, and for other expenses connected with their religious privileges and institutions; thus diminishing, in a corresponding measure, the claims on the parent Society. So far as this cause operated, its results were eminently beneficial: but the Committee were obliged to admit, that a considerable part of the reduction effected in the expenditure must be ascribed to stern and resolute adherence to the resolution, as far as it was in any sense innocently possible, to delay the commencement of new Missions; and even in some cases to withhold, for a time, the adequate reinforcement of existing stations, when enfeebled by the death or removal of former labourers. This was a very painful and distressing, but necessary, alternative. The continued existence of a large debt was unjustifiable in principle, and exceedingly expensive, from the large charges which it occasioned for interest and discounts.

Although Methodism had closed the first centenary cycle of its existence, and had passed through severe struggles and conflicts, and even though these had called forth earnest and long-continued controversies, it was still without any compact and intelligible code of law, or body of rules. Laws had, indeed, been framed to meet the circumstances of the Connexion as occasion required. . And these, devised under the influence of one grand ruling object, to promote scriptural religion in all its purity and power, were so harmonious in substance and in spirit, that they were countenanced, and their authority upheld, by the High Court of Chancery. But these laws and rules lay scattered through the Minutes of sixty or seventy annual Conferences. And

they stood there, not in any classified form, but simply in the chronological order of their enactment, and in connexion with the arrangements and transactions of the Conference. It was, therefore, in an extremely difficult task to ascertain what the Conference had enacted in respect of any given subject. This difficulty was felt by those among the people who wished to possess an intelligent acquaintance with the system of their choice, and to understand all its requirements; and it pressed much more severely on the ministers who had to administer these laws in their daily ecclesiastical duties. Burthened by harassing and continually recurring labours, with very insufficient time at his command for theological and general study, the Methodist minister was frequently unable to devote sufficient attention to the study of Wesleyan polity to save himself from error, or to enable him in a satisfactory manner to expound and administer the law.

Publication of Grindrod's Compendium of Methodist law. Its character and contents.

An important contribution was made, in the early part of 1842, towards the removal of this serious difficulty, in the publication of "A Compendium of the Laws and Regulations of Wesleyan Methodism," by the Rev. Edmund Grindrod. The evil was not fully removed, nor the existing want adequately met, by this work; for it was not an authorized body of Wesleyan law, which could alone meet the necessity of the case. But, although Grindrod's book was published on the sole responsibility of the author, and of itself was no authoritative code or exposition of law, it afforded invaluable aid to all who wished to understand Wesleyan polity. As a whole, the work proves the author to be well acquainted with the Wesleyan system, in its history, principles of polity, and working. On its first appearance it was an invaluable exhibition of Wesleyan Rules and Regulations; and, even

now, notwithstanding the changes which have taken place, it continues to be extensively useful.

This Compendium exhibits the whole body of Wesleyan Methodist law in a systematized form. It consists of four parts :—

I. The ecclesiastical courts of Methodism. Here the origin, constitution, and laws which regulate the legislation of the Conference, with the origin, authority, and proper functions of District Meetings, are fully shown. The constitution of local courts, Quarterly Meetings, Leaders' Meetings, Local Preachers' Meetings, and Trustee Meetings, is also given ; and to these is added a summary of the duties of a superintendent.

II. "The Community of Wesleyan Methodists." This part contains the rules of Society, the Band Rules ; miscellaneous Rules, relating to members of Society, to the administration of discipline, love-feasts, public worship, &c.

III. The institutions of the Connexion. Here we have all the regulations respecting the Missionary Society, the Theological Institutions, educational operations, the Tract Society, and Book Establishment.

IV. The laws pertaining to the several connexional funds.

The highly respected and able author of this work was removed from the church below, to his heavenly rest, a few months after its publication. He died on Sunday, May the eleventh, 1842, after labouring in the Wesleyan ministry thirty-six years with great credit and success. Brought to experience salvation when about fourteen, he evinced a maturity of piety, and was appointed a local preacher at the age of nineteen, and called to the work of the ministry about a year afterward. He was eminent for self-control, a strong sense of propriety, and an unflinching

Happy death
of the Rev.
E. Grindrod.

adherence to rectitude. As a minister of God's Holy Word, he particularly excelled in the gift of teaching. In 1833, he was sent as the representative of the British Conference to Canada. He had also repeatedly discharged the duties of secretary of the Conference in a very satisfactory manner, and was, in 1837, appointed its President. During a long and painful affliction, he was patient and resigned, and died in great peace.

Intolerance
of High
Churchmen.
Case of the
vicar of
Gedney.

The continued aggression of the High Church party on the ecclesiastical position and evangelical principles of Wesleyan Methodism, compelled the Connexion to resort to measures of self-defence. Fully assured of the scriptural character of their doctrine and polity, they determined to vindicate both by the legitimate means which Providence had placed within their reach.

This was attempted, in the first place, by an appeal from the press to the religious judgment and intelligence of the public. A series of "Wesleyan Tracts for the Times" dealt with the question, "Why don't you come to Church?" "Apostolical Succession," "Methodism not a Schism," "Modern Methodism," "*Wesleyan* Methodism," "Baptismal Regeneration," and other kindred subjects. Some of these tracts were written with great ability; and although, as a whole, they do not exhibit the most successful literary defence of the Connexion, they rendered important service at the time of publication.

But this aggression sometimes assumed a form which was proof against all the powers of reason and persuasion, and which nothing but an appeal to the laws of the land could meet and avert. At Gedney, in the county of Lincoln, the clergyman, the Rev. T. S. Escott, refused to inter the child of a parishioner according to the rites of the Established Church, on the ground of her

having been baptized by a Wesleyan minister. The Rev. Robert Bond, the superintendent of the Circuit, placed a statement of the case before the Bishop of Lincoln; expressing a hope that his lordship would take such steps "as will convince Mr. Escott of his error, and prevent a repetition of the course so much to be deprecated by every friend of the Church of England." To this letter the bishop sent a courteous reply, stating that he would write to Mr. Escott, calling his attention to the last legal decision on the subject; but that, if he persisted in his purpose, the aggrieved parties must apply to the Ecclesiastical Court.

Four days after the date of this letter, Mr. Bond wrote to Mr. Escott, informing him of the correspondence with the bishop, and insisting that he was still bound to read the Burial Service over the grave of the child, if required to do so by the friends of the deceased; but that there was no wish to press the case so far; and that, provided he acknowledged his error, no further steps would be taken. This courteous communication elicited one of the most extraordinary replies ever placed on record. "Sir," wrote the bigoted son of the Church, "I have just received one of the most disgusting and impudent letters from you that I ever received in my life; but certainly well suited to *those beings who pretend to be ministers of the Gospel, and really are ministers of hell*. I mean the dissenting mountebanks. You may, Sir, apply to all the twenty-six bishops, if you like; or do anything else that may please you, if you do not write to me. No bishop will interfere with me for not doing that which I promised, on my ordination, not to do. As to your threats, I am taught, by the highest authority, to treat them with the utmost defiance. If you write to me again, under any pretence whatever, I will either send

the letter back to you unanswered, or place it in the hands of an attorney." This letter was addressed to "Robert Bond, Esq." The bishop regretted the exceptionable terms in which Mr. Escott had expressed his determination, but repeated his inability to interfere further.

Prosecution
of the Rev.
Mr. Escott
in the eccle-
siastical
courts.

As no redress was attainable by other means, the case was submitted to the Committee of Privileges; who, having taken the opinion of counsel, were induced to proceed against Mr. Escott, in the Court of Arches. The suit was heard before Sir Herbert Jenner, January twenty-eighth, 1841, and throughout three days afterward. The learned judge pronounced an elaborate judgment on the third of May, which fully declared the right of persons baptized by Wesleyan ministers to Christian burial, according to the rites of the Church of England; and that the clergymen of that Church are under legal obligation to perform the burial service over such persons when required. Mr. Escott was accordingly sentenced to suspension for three months, and to pay the costs of the suit.

Vicar of
Gedney
suspended
for three
months, and
condemned
in costs.

Immediately on the delivery of this judgment, notice was given of appeal to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the highest court of judicature for such questions. The case was argued in this court, June twenty-third, 1842, and judgment given July second, confirming the sentence of the Court of Arches, and condemning the appellant in the costs of the appeal. Thus the question was completely settled in the most authoritative manner.

CHAPTER V.

FROM THE CONFERENCE OF 1842 TO THE END OF 1843.

THE Conference was held in London in 1842. The preliminary committees were well attended and very harmonious. The conversation in the Missionary Committee of Review was particularly animated. The progress made towards the liquidation of the large debt which had pressed on the Society, occasioned grateful thanksgiving, and general exhilaration of spirit. The Report of the Theological Institution was highly gratifying, and exceeded the most sanguine hopes of its projectors. The Committee of the Centenary Fund announced, that the receipts and accruing interest had now reached two hundred and ten thousand five hundred pounds; and that as one hundred and ninety thousand pounds had already been appropriated, the balance was available for the Missionary Society and Theological Institution.

The Rev. Dr. Hannah was chosen president, and the Rev. Robert Newton secretary. The Rev. Joshua Soule, D.D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church of America, was introduced as the representative of that branch of the Methodist family, with the Rev. Thomas Sargent, his travelling companion. The bishop delivered an animated and interesting address, thanking the Conference for the affectionate welcome he had received, and giving a general statistical account of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and also of its domestic and missionary operations. The Rev. Thomas Sargent also briefly addressed the Conference.

The Conference of 1842: its committees and proceedings.

The Rev. Dr. Hannah president.

A rather novel feature in the proceedings of this Conference was the introduction of the Rev. Mr. Sydow, a Prussian clergyman, accompanied by the venerable Dr. Steinkopf. The Doctor introduced his friend to the Conference in a short speech, and the president gave Mr. Sydow a hearty welcome. He said that himself and his brethren would be glad to receive any information respecting the state of religion on the Continent generally; but particularly in Germany, as they could not forget what British Methodism owed to German instrumentality. He referred to the spiritual aid which Peter Böhler and other German Christians had rendered to Wesley, and to the fact that "it was while 'one was reading Luther's preface to the Epistle to the Romans,' at a religious meeting in Aldersgate Street, London, that Wesley was made, personally, a partaker of the pardoning mercy of God." What Wesley had thus learned and experienced, he preached to others; and by this preaching the Wesleyan Societies had been gathered and united.

Interesting
address of a
Prussian
clergyman
to the Con-
ference.

The Rev. Mr. Sydow, after expressing regret that his limited knowledge of the English language must render his address shorter and more difficult than it would otherwise be, reviewed the state of religion in Germany during the past century, and drew a most melancholy picture of it through the greater portion of that time. "Error," he observed, "under almost every form had generally prevailed, and through many of these years men lived without God in the world. There were the *Naturalists*, who saw nothing but what was obvious to their senses, or, as they considered, directly to be inferred from it. Others talked, indeed, of God, but they were not less atheistical than the others. The *Pantheists* proposed a sort of universal life, as composed of the countless multitude of individual lives; but

they acknowledged no living personal God, distinct from His creatures, preserving and governing them. Then they had the *Rationalists*, who strangely connected themselves with the religion whose foundations they undermined. From the Bible they took away all inspiration, and from its recorded facts everything supernatural and miraculous. And in this way had infidelity spread most widely, while very little was known of spiritual religion, even where all belief in Christianity had not been cast away. But, proceeded Mr. Sydow, "within the last twenty or thirty years, particularly, a very different and a much happier state of things had been growing up. The principles of religion had been revived. Religious belief was more common. The seats of learning were not abandoned to Rationalism. Men of learning were not ashamed of Christianity, and of Christianity as a supernatural religion. Nor was this all. He was happy to say, that the change of which he had spoken, not only included religious belief, but what was truly and properly spiritual religion. And it was a remarkable circumstance, that this had taken place very decidedly among the educated classes. Infidelity was sinking very low." He then spoke of the progress of religion in the highest circles of German society, and of the favourable influence of Methodism on the religion of the country, and particularly of the impression made by the observance of the Centenary, and appearance of the Centenary volume. Mr. Sydow's address was received with deep attention and pleasure.

This Conference passed no legislative acts of public interest. The measures previously adopted respecting Canadian Methodism were confirmed. The Address of the Upper Canada Conference was considered. But it was unanimously resolved, that while the Conference fully

admitted the importance of the general principle, "that all the branches of the Methodist Church situated within the British dominions should be united under the efficient direction of the British Conference, on the principles of our general economy," and would gladly take into consideration any proposition likely to promote so desirable a result, it is "nevertheless fully convinced that, for reasons already officially communicated to the Upper Canada Conference, the re-establishment of such a union as formerly subsisted between the two bodies, is neither practicable nor desirable." Some useful regulations were made respecting the visits of chairmen of Districts to solitary stations, and the numerical return for members. The rule for admitting members was explained; direction was given respecting the reading of the Pastoral Address, and for the preservation of the minutes of the District Meetings; but these do not call for a more detailed notice.

One subject which engaged the serious attention of the assembled ministers was the fact, that there had been a decrease of members in the Societies in Great Britain during the past year. This had very rarely been the case, —scarcely ever, except as the result of some disturbance or agitation in the Societies; yet it occurred here close upon the consummation of the great Centenary movement. Does this indicate that the stirring excitement attending the success of a great financial measure may be very unfavourable to personal piety? The decrease was small, —from three hundred and twenty-eight thousand seven hundred and ninety-two in 1841, to three hundred and twenty-six thousand seven hundred and twenty-seven in 1842,—a falling off of two thousand and sixty-five; and this was more than counterbalanced by the increase in Ireland and on the Mission Stations; so that the total members in all

the Societies under the care of the British Conference showed an increase of two thousand three hundred and seventy-eight. Nevertheless, the loss at home occasioned deep and serious inquiry, and caused a strong recommendation that particular attention should be paid to the Liverpool Minutes in the ensuing District Meetings.

The following instance of royal liberality was publicly stated in the newspapers of the day, and is known to rest on very good authority. A young female domestic of the royal household, being recently met by a physician, was asked what was the matter with her, as it struck him from her appearance that some mental anguish had rendered her aspect very different from what it usually was. The young woman replied, she was sorry to say she had been dismissed from Her Majesty's service. On being pressed for the reason, she stated that she had ventured to unite herself with the Methodists, which had offended her superior, and led to her dismissal. The circumstances coming to the knowledge of Her Majesty, the superior servant was questioned, and admitted that she had turned away the subordinate because she was a Methodist. The Queen expressed her sorrow that the lady interrogated should take so austere a step with regard to her inferior; adding, it would pain her exceedingly were any class of her subjects to suffer on account of their religion; more particularly if such should be the case in her own household. If either party were dismissed, Her Majesty thought it should be the person who could act so illiberally to one who had honourably followed out the dictates of an enlightened conscience; she must inform that person that she had no further occasion for her services. The young woman was restored.

Instance of
royal reli-
gious libe-
rality.

Particular attention was now called to the Missions in

Troubled
state of the
missions in
South Africa.

Africa. Intelligence of a very distressing character had been received from the Bechuana Mission in the South. The Dutch African Boers, as they were called, had again threatened the missionaries and the people of their charge. As this Mission was conducted by nine missionaries, besides other agents, at a cost of about four thousand a year, and had been very successful in evangelizing the native population, and introducing among them settled and industrious habits, this aggression excited considerable regret and alarm; especially as it was known that peaceable natives, living under British protection, had been cruelly murdered, their children carried off and sold into slavery, or exchanged for cattle, and even English missionaries threatened and fired at. The Missionary Committee drew up an exceedingly able and comprehensive memorial, setting forth the facts of the case, and presented it to Lord Stanley, the secretary of state for the colonies; who promptly replied, that the memorial had been transmitted to the governor of the colony at the Cape of Good Hope, and that Her Majesty's government had taken, and were still taking, such steps as they hoped might be effectual for maintaining peace, and upholding the authority of Her Majesty within her dominions in South Africa.

Bitter as the feeling and spirit of high Churchmen had always been towards Methodism, it was rendered much more intense by the labours of the Oxford Tract writers, and those of their chief, Dr. Pusey. Language the most violent, and allegations the most absurd and false, were put forth with unblushing effrontery and perseverance; and where it could be attempted with a hope of success, even positive persecution was resorted to. We have cases before us in which honest and industrious tradesmen and farmers had been deprived of the means of livelihood, and driven to

seek a maintenance in strange places, by such clerical intolerance.

At length Dr. Pusey published such charges against the Wesleyans in his letter to the archbishop of Canterbury, that Methodist ministers thought the time had come for checking this monstrous current of vainglorious conceit and violent calumny. The Rev. Thomas Jackson accordingly entered the lists with the Rev. Oxford Professor, in a letter addressed to that gentleman as a "Vindication of the Tenets and Character of the Wesleyan Methodists against his Misrepresentations and Censures."

Dr. Pusey's
attack on
Methodism.

In this able pamphlet the author fully accomplished the purpose which he had announced. A clergyman, writing to a religious periodical, observes:—"The perusal of this letter has given me great satisfaction, as it contains not only a defence of that Body (the Wesleyans) against groundless calumnies, but also a very able vindication of several essential points in our 'common Christianity.' On the doctrine of Justification by Faith, nothing can be more scriptural and more consistent with the views of our Reformers. The same commendation may be justly bestowed on what is advanced in behalf of religious experience.

This attack
repelled and
its author
rebuked by
the Rev.
Thomas
Jackson.

"The light in which Dr. Pusey appears is certainly by no means a favourable one. No man, having anything like right feelings, being convicted, as he is, of what is wholly false and slanderous, could possibly feel otherwise than ashamed. There is, in the charges he has made, not only great and palpable ignorance of what is held by the Wesleyan Body, but also of what is taught in the word of God. No one can read Mr. Jackson's letter without perceiving this to be the case. As far as that Body is concerned, the Professor is clearly shown to be a reviler,

and, it may be said, an incorrigible reviler ; for he repeats and enlarges in his letter to the archbishop the false charges which he had previously stated in his letter to the Bishop of Oxford, which charges had in the mean time been publicly disproved and refuted. With regard to divine truth, the evidence against the Professor is, if possible, still stronger, and it is brought forward and handled with such ability and discrimination as I have seldom witnessed." We entirely concur in this judgment respecting Mr. Jackson's pamphlet. It is a very useful and timely defence of the Methodists, and an able exposition of their doctrines and character, adapted to convey important information to candid and honest minds. But we believe it, and everything of the kind, to be utterly useless to the class of religionists whose errors it exposes. Deaf to everything but their own statements, they proceed with marvellous effrontery to repeat allegations which have been a thousand times refuted, and to make assertions which have been over and over again proved false, precisely as if they had never been questioned, but were universally received as established truth.

Destructive
earthquake
in the West
Indies.

The friends of Missions were deeply grieved by intelligence received from the West Indies. An earthquake of unusual severity was felt in many of those islands, causing a vast destruction of property and a fearful loss of life. In the French island of Guadaloupe, the considerable town of Point-à-Pitre was entirely destroyed ; the small portion which escaped the shock was consumed by the fire which broke out immediately on the falling of the houses. Innumerable corpses were buried in the ruins, and upwards of fifteen hundred maimed and wounded were taken out of the *débris*. Other small towns and villages were also overthrown, with similar results. Of the English islands,

Antigua suffered most severely; but considerable damage was also done in Dominica, Montserrat, Nevis, St. Christopher's, and St. Eustatius. In Antigua, a large and beautiful chapel, recently built, was destroyed. The estimated damage to this structure alone was between two thousand five hundred and three thousand pounds. Serious injury was also done to other chapels and mission-houses, making an aggregate loss in that island of above five thousand pounds. The damage in the other islands, to chapels and mission property, greatly enhanced this amount, and occasioned much suffering and distress. Large congregations were deprived of all means of assembling for worship, and had to begin almost anew to raise sanctuaries at a time when they were suffering severely from the loss of private property. The case excited much sympathy among the friends of Missions in this country, and led to a liberal special subscription, to aid those so deeply distressed, in rebuilding and repairing their chapels and mission-houses.

Another public measure called forth the Wesleyan Connection, in appeals to Parliament, with a unanimity and energy never before manifested since the famous opposition to Lord Sidmouth's Bill. The condition of the children and young persons employed in the numerous and extensive factories so rapidly multiplying in the country, had long engaged the attention of philanthropists, and pressed itself on the consideration of the legislature. Urged by these circumstances, Sir James Graham, then Her Majesty's secretary of state for the home department, introduced a Bill into Parliament, designed to insure the better regulation of the young people employed in factories. As might be expected, arrangements for promoting education were made an important part of this measure. But intense surprise and indignation were excited when it was found,

Renewed attempt to introduce a proselyting and persecuting plan of education.

that the plan which had been partially enunciated by the Committee of Privy Council, and so generally condemned, was made the basis of this new legislation. When this became generally known, it roused the alarm and opposition of all classes. The clauses of the Bill were framed on the assumption, that the clergy of the Established Church alone have a right to educate the people ; and accordingly the approval of the bishop of the diocese was made essential to the employment of any schoolmaster under the provisions of the Act. This was not likely to be given to any but strict Churchmen : so that all the teachers trained by the British and Foreign School Society, and the Glasgow and Normal Schools, would be rejected. Whilst Church of England influence was thus sought to be promoted at the public expense, no provision whatever was made for the extension of religious education in any other Christian denomination. The measure was, therefore, scarcely a concealed proposal for proselyting, and was obviously capable of being rendered an instrument of persecution to parents and children. If passed into law, as proposed, the Bill would not only have lowered the character and placed in discredit all the existing schools of Nonconformist denominations, but would evidently have led to the deterioration, if not to the extinction, of both their day and their Sunday schools.

Under any circumstances, and at any time, such a measure would be sure to encounter united and energetic opposition from the Nonconformists of the kingdom ; but at a season like this, when the Popish tendencies of a vast number of the most influential leaders in the Episcopal Establishment had become notorious, to have allowed it to be endowed with the responsible charge of conducting exclusively the religious education of the children of the industrial classes, would have been fatal to the interests

of evangelical religion, and to the Protestantism of the empire.

The Wesleyan community not only united with other Nonconformists in meetings convened for opposing the educational clauses of this Bill, but they organized a connexional opposition to it. Petitions were numerously signed and sent from the several congregations in town and country. The number of petitions from Wesleyan congregations was five thousand three hundred and fifty-two; bearing five hundred and nineteen thousand six hundred and twenty-eight signatures.

The opposition was successful. The minister, amid cheers from every part of the house, at first announced that the educational clauses were withdrawn. When, however, the Bill, as altered, was examined, it was found that some very objectionable clauses remained. It was attempted to justify these on the plea that they were not new enactments, but merely set forth laws already in existence. This did not satisfy the public. The condemnation of the measure continued, until at length Sir Robert Peel declared that the Bill was withdrawn entirely.

The obnoxious Bill defeated and withdrawn.

The Rev. Thomas Galland died at Hull, May twelfth, 1843. A native of this town, and converted to God when about fifteen years of age, he soon after joined the Wesleyan Society. Designed for the ministry of the Established Church, he was sent to the University of Cambridge; where, in due course, he graduated Master of Arts. During his residence at college, he retained his connexion with the Methodists; and maintained throughout his studies the experience of the power of religion. When the time arrived for him to decide on his future course of life, he determined to devote himself to the Wesleyan ministry,—a resolve which exposed him to many

Death of the Rev. Thomas Galland.

difficulties. This was not done, however, under any juvenile partiality for his early associations. He very carefully considered the doctrines, economy, and discipline of the Connexion, and those of other religious denominations, in the light of Holy Scripture. Arriving at the conclusion, that Methodism was more in harmony with the doctrines and examples of the New Testament than any other church, he heartily embraced it as his own. He was a very able preacher; simple, clear, and powerful in the proclamation of the Gospel; but as an expositor of Holy Scripture, he was, perhaps, without an equal in his day. His efforts of this character in preaching, and while reading the Morning Lessons, were truly wonderful. He was a faithful pastor, diligently caring for the souls of the people, as one that must give an account. He was, as an official record says, "an Israelite indeed, in whom was no guile." He was a man of vigorous understanding, cultivated by sound learning, of lofty independence in thought and action, of enlarged and catholic views, and of great disinterestedness of purpose. He had previously suffered from two attacks of paralysis, and was taken away by a third and very aggravated seizure. He expired unspeakably "happy in Jesus," as he declared with dying lips.

Death of the
Rev. Richard
Treffry, Sen.

The Rev. Richard Treffry, Sen., was also removed by death in this connexional year. We have already spoken of this excellent man and eminent minister, on his being placed in the chair of the Conference. We may, however, observe, that he did honour to the choice of his brethren, and discharged the duties of the presidency in a very satisfactory and efficient manner. On the retirement of Entwisle, in 1839, he was appointed House Governor and Chaplain of the Institution at Hoxton. Notwithstanding a somewhat rough exterior, he displayed great judgment and

affection in the management of that establishment. He intended to return to the regular course of ministerial duty, and had actually arranged with a Circuit prior to the Conference of 1842 ; but, just before its session, his health failed. He became a supernumerary in the Windsor Circuit, and resided at Maidenhead. He died, witnessing a good confession, September the nineteenth, 1842.

The Wesleyan Conference of 1843 was held in Sheffield. The Rev. John Scott was elected president, and the Rev. Robert Newton secretary. The gloom which rested on the last annual assembly, in consequence of a small decrease in the number of members, was now happily removed ; and the meeting was cheered with an increase to the Societies in Great Britain and Ireland of above four thousand.

The Conference of 1843: its proceedings.

The preliminary committees proceeded in their usual course. The Report of the Kingswood Schools, stating that between sixty and eighty of the youths had met in Class during the year, was particularly gratifying. In the Educational Committee, the Rev. Robert Newstead, one of the secretaries, read a very elaborate and interesting Report, which communicated important information respecting the educational efforts of the Connexion, then in their infancy. The attendance at the Missionary Committee of Review was unusually numerous. The Rev. Jonathan Crowther and the Rev. Thomas Hodson delivered very interesting addresses on the state and prospects of Christianity in India.

Another circumstance, which excited considerable interest, was the consent of the Rev. Walter Lawry to return to the Mission work in the southern hemisphere. He had spent several of the early years of his ministerial life among the

cannibals of the South Sea Islands ; and after being honourably employed at home in some very important Circuits, he was now willing to return to the scene of his former labours. The Conference gladly appointed him general superintendent of the Missions in New Zealand, and visitor of the Missions in the Friendly Islands and Fiji.

No legislative or disciplinary action calling for particular mention took place at this Conference. The Connexion was in peace and prosperity ; and the duty of the assembled ministers was simply the exercise of the ordinary functions of the Conference. Having discharged these, and made arrangements for the working of the Connexion during the ensuing year, they dispersed to their several spheres of labour. This was the hundredth Conference held in Methodism. The first was convened by Wesley, and met in the Foundery, Moorfields, London, June the twenty-fifth, 1744 ; * and henceforth the preachers met annually during the entire period.

Conclusion
of our his-
torical nar-
rative.

With this Conference our regular narrative of Wesleyan events terminates. The duty with which we charged ourselves was the History of the first Century of Wesleyan Methodism ; and our task would have closed with the inauguration of the Centenary year, had it not appeared desirable, that the completion of the noble objects contemplated by that movement should be exhibited in a complete and realized form. This necessitated the extension of the narrative thus far,—a circumstance which has perfectly carried out our purpose. The Conference selected, as they were certainly justified in doing, the date of 1739, when the first United Methodist Society was formed, as the time of the origin of the Connexion, and accord-

* Vol. i., p. 210.

ingly made the first century of its existence close in 1839. But no formation of a Society, or number of Societies, gives to a Methodist of the present day any just idea of the existence of Methodism, in the absence of a Conference, and before the inauguration of such a body. We regard it, therefore, as a pleasing circumstance, that the necessity of recording the consummation of the Centenary projects has led us on, so as to present a narrative of Wesleyan Methodist progress throughout the first hundred years of its existence, in every sense of the expression.

So far as the financial operation of the Centenary Fund is concerned, we have already given sufficient information as to the objects contemplated, and the grants made to secure them. We have now to describe more particularly those permanent and memorial erections which form an important part of the Centenary plan, but which it required considerable time to complete.

Consumma-
tion of the
Centenary
operations.

The first of these, in the order of time, and perhaps of connexional prominence, is the Centenary Hall and Mission House. The reader has been already informed, that the building formerly known as the City of London Tavern, in Bishopsgate Street, was purchased, and extensive alterations and improvements were commenced, to adapt it to all the purposes of its future appropriation. The front has a bold and noble appearance. It is, indeed, a chaste and elegant architectural structure, whilst the extensive and commodious interior adapts it well for the transaction of the multifarious business with every part of the world carried on beneath its roof. It is, indeed, at once a complete Mission House, and a noble memorial of Methodism, permanently proclaiming, in the centre of the City of London, the power and heart of the Wesleyan Connexion at the close of the first century of its existence.

The Cente-
nary Hall
and Mission
House.

Interesting
and impres-
sive religious
services.

This building was so far advanced toward completion, that the business of the Missions was transferred to it from the old house in Hatton Garden, in January, 1841. And the whole was finished early in the following April. The place was formally opened by divine service in the large Upper Hall, on Thursday, the twenty-ninth of that month. We shall never forget the joyousness and solemnity of that memorable occasion. In opening the service, Dr. Bunting said, that he hoped they had met under the auspices of Almighty God, and in confident expectation of His presence and blessing. He then read the official documents, which verified the legal appropriation of the building to sacred purposes. Dr. Bunting then gave out,

“Before Jehovah’s awful throne,” &c.,

which was sung with spirit and pathos. The Morning Service of the Established Church was then read, the Lessons selected for the occasion being Isaiah lv., and 1 Thess. i. The hymns before the sermon were ;

“O Thou that camest from above ;”

and,

“Jesus, I fain would find.”

The Rev. Robert Newton, president of the Conference, selected as his text Numbers xxiii. 23: “According to this time it shall be said of Jacob and of Israel, What hath God wrought !” After some general observations on the operations of God, as manifested in the arrangements of His providence and the dispensations of His grace, the preacher proceeded to refer to the work which had been carried on in Wesleyan Methodism as a religious community for one hundred years, as a signal work of God. This view he expanded and illustrated by various interesting and important statements and facts. He then directed attention to the practical conclusions which the consideration of

the subject appeared calculated to suggest. The service was one of deep and affecting interest. It was, to the large congregation assembled and crowded together, one of hal-
lowed instruction and sanctified spiritual profit. It called up, and spread before the mind, the most striking and affecting facts, statements, and scenes, which had given life to successive Centenary meetings; but these were illustrated and urged on the attention in a subdued form, and in such deeply religious aspects and associations, that the result was eminently spiritual and blessed.

From that time to the present this noble building has afforded the requisite accommodation for the ever-increasing business of the Missionary Society,—the grand centre whence pecuniary aid, ministerial direction, literary supplies, and general necessities radiate to the Mission stations in every part of the habitable globe. And there are held the frequently-recurring valedictory services in which devoted Christian ministers are counselled and encouraged to give themselves up to the missionary work, with all its labour and peril. And there these men take a long, and many of them a last, farewell of their dearest associations on earth. Truly, that house is a grand memorial temple to the service of the living God, and the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom.

The purchase of an estate at Didsbury, about five miles from Manchester, for the northern branch of the Theological Institution, has been already mentioned. There was a dwelling-house, forming a suitable residence for the governor, leaving some of the larger rooms as classrooms. To this building wings were added, for a library, refectory, and lecture-room, with studies and dormitories for forty students. Besides these additions, it was indispensable that there should be a chapel, and two houses for

Important appropriation of the premises.

The northern branch of the Institution at Didsbury.

tutors. All this was done, and the new erections were completed, about the end of August, 1842. The front of the Institution is faced with stone, and presents a substantial and handsome appearance. The chapel, which stands near the Institution, towards the entrance of the grounds, is a neat brick building, in the old English style of architecture: it has a gallery at one end, and on each side. It contains about three hundred sittings. On either side of the chapel is a house for the residence of the tutors. The religious services in the chapel are conducted every Lord's day by the governor, tutors, and students.

This branch opened with affecting religious services.

Thursday, September twenty-second, was the day appointed for the opening of this interesting establishment. There was a numerous attendance of subscribers and ministers, the students also having arrived and taken their assigned quarters. Religious service was conducted in the chapel in the morning, when the Liturgy of the Established Church was read by the governor, and a sermon preached by Dr. Hannah, the president of the Conference, on, "One thing have I desired of the Lord, that will I seek after; that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in His temple." (Psalm xxvii. 4.) "The richly solemn, but animated eloquence of the preacher, and still more the unction from above which attended the discourse, produced a feeling of high delight in the minds of his hearers; and all seemed agreed to take the blessing then vouchsafed as a token of the divine approbation of their object in founding the Institution, and an earnest of many future blessings to be bestowed upon the students in the establishment, and through them on the Connexion at large."

After service, the friends looked over the premises and

grounds, and then the greater number of the subscribers sat down to a cold collation in the refectory. The day was concluded by a meeting in the lecture-room, at which addresses were delivered by the president of the Conference, the ex-president, the president of the Institution, the treasurer and secretary of the northern branch, the Rev. W. L. Thornton, classical tutor, and several lay gentlemen. "The meeting was pervaded by a lively feeling of satisfaction at the present posture of the affairs of the Institution, and by a determination to make new efforts, that its present improved and advantageous position might be well sustained."

The services of this delightful day were what we have called them,—the opening of the Institution. From that time, the regular course of instruction and religious discipline of the students commenced, and held on its way with steadiness of purpose and great success. From year to year a band of young ministers has left these studies, to take their places, either at home or abroad, as ministers of Christ. And although, occasionally, the friends of that establishment, in common with all others engaged in promoting the cause of Christ in this world of frailty and sin, have had reason to complain that they bestowed their labour on unworthy objects, these have been the rare and uncommon exception to the general rule. The great majority of these young men have proved themselves to be not only able and educated ministers of the New Testament, but, by a life of godly devotedness and zeal, have shown that their piety as well as their intellectual culture was promoted at the Institution.

The foundation-stone of the Centenary Chapel, St. Stephen's Green, Dublin, was laid by the Hon. Judge

Crampton, the ceremony being accompanied by solemn religious services, in the presence of a vast multitude, on the twenty-second of March, 1842. It was finished, and opened for divine service, on Sunday the eighteenth of June in the following year, by Drs. Bunting and Newton. It is a beautiful building, and contains twelve hundred sittings. It is supposed that two thousand persons were within the walls on the opening day.

Completion
and opening
of the Rich-
mond Insti-
tution.

The last of the useful and memorial establishments, contemplated by the Centenary Fund Committee, was the southern branch of the Theological Institution, for which a very eligible site had been purchased on Richmond Hill, immediately adjoining Richmond Park. Here a new and beautiful building was erected from designs by A. Trimen, Esq., architect, of Regent Street, London; and, being finished and furnished, was appropriated to its intended use by solemn dedication to the service of God, on Friday, September the fifteenth, 1843. This building is beyond question the most extensive and beautiful of any connected with Methodism. The magnificent and extended front, with its two wings projecting and covering the ends and closing in the view to the chaste and elegant details of the simple, yet richly ornamented, elevation, presents an appearance of real grandeur. The internal arrangements are no less striking. Connected with a beautiful entrance hall and staircase, there are the library, lecture rooms, class rooms, refectory, studies, dormitories, and, indeed, every requisite for such an establishment. The prospect is very extensive and beautiful.

The whole of the preliminary arrangements having been completed, the ministers, officers, and friends congregated in the morning; and the proceedings of the joyous day

were begun with an excellent breakfast, at which about three hundred individuals sat down. The preparations for this entertainment had been made in a manner so judicious and complete, that all were supplied with the greatest promptitude and regularity. At one o'clock the committee, students, ministers, and other friends, congregated in the large lecture room. Dr. Bunting, the president of the Institution, gave out,

“The Saviour, when to heaven He rose,” &c.,

and the venerable and Reverend Joseph Sutcliffe, A.M., engaged in prayer. Dr. Bunting then rose and delivered an animated and powerful address. He observed that the arrangements for the day were made with a view to render direct devotional services, such as hearty thanksgivings to God for the blessings by which they were surrounded, and solemn and earnest prayer that success and prosperity might attend both the branches of the Wesleyan Theological Institution. It was their settled purpose to make this strictly religious duty the most prominent. But, perhaps before it was begun, he and one or two others might be permitted to make a few observations.

They were now met, he observed, at the opening of a most important establishment, which was located on the beautiful spot on which they stood. He warned his hearers not to expect from him or the other speakers elaborate orations; Methodist preachers had not time for their preparation; besides, he liked the simplicity of Methodism, and, therefore, hoped it would be remembered in reference to the object of their present concern. He had great objection to this place being called Richmond College: it was the Richmond Institution. He then spoke of the desire which Wesley felt to have a seminary for young ministers, and observed that the

means which were so early felt to be desirable, were after the lapse of a century supplied. He admitted that the Institution, having been in action but about eight years, could only, in a practical sense, be regarded as an experiment; but he was bold to say, and he said it with thankfulness, that it had hitherto been a successful and encouraging experiment. The speaker then contrasted their case with the circumstances of Wesley, who could not proceed for want of a tutor, while we had men in abundance, every way qualified for that important duty. Dr. Bunting closed his address by appealing to the friends of the Institution for increased annual support; arguing, that if persons gave one pound per annum to sustain an Institution with thirty students, they should surely give two pounds to support two Institutions with seventy-six students.

It had been arranged for the afternoon service to be conducted in the chapel at Richmond: but the assembly was larger than it would accommodate. Under these circumstances the service was held on the lawn in front of the Institution. The president of the Conference, the Rev. John Scott, delivered an impressive and very profitable discourse from Psalm iv. 3: "Know that the Lord hath set apart him that is godly for Himself." After singing and prayer, the company separated, delighted and edified with the services of the day.

Those familiar with the efforts made to instruct a few young men in premises which bore no very distant resemblance to a series of gloomy pigeon-holes, in Hoxton, will remember the improvement which the opening of Abney House for some of the students afforded. But what was this, in its contractedness and want of adaptation to the required purposes, to the Richmond establishment,

—premises as beautiful as they were commodious, and well fitted for the object for which they were designed? Here the desires of the most ardent were met; and utility and elegance combined to supply, in the most ample and complete manner, the necessity which had been so long felt.

We have now to draw our History to a close. We have traced the progress of the Wesleyan Connexion through the first hundred years of its existence, and we find it, at the close of this period, not sunk into decay, not waning with age, but full of power, and rejoicing as a strong man to run a race. Never before, in the whole course of its history, were its ministers so numerous, able, learned, and well qualified for their great work. Never were the laity so respectable in their social position, or more devoted to Methodism. Never before were the public institutions of our church invested with such influence, position, and power as now.

Concluding
observations.

We commenced this volume with the Conference of 1816, and we now set down the numbers in the Societies of Great Britain, Ireland, and the Mission Stations, at that period, in juxtaposition with the numbers in 1843, and exhibit the result of the comparison :—

	1816.	1843.	Decrease.	Increase.
Great Britain ...	191,680	331,024	—	139,344
Ireland.....	28,542	28,004	538	—
Missions	21,097	92,258	—	71,161
				<hr/> 210,505
			Decrease	538
Totals	<hr/> 241,319	<hr/> 451,286	Increase	<hr/> 209,967

Let these figures be carefully considered. Here is an increase of members, in twenty-seven years,—notwithstanding the intervention of an extensive agitation and secession,—of ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-NINE THOUSAND THREE HUNDRED AND FORTY-FOUR in Great Britain alone; an average increase, during the whole period, of above five thousand members per annum, besides repairing all losses arising from deaths, backslidings, and emigration, which in those years were very numerous. Ireland is an exception to this rule, simply because we happen to begin with the year 1816, when the agitation respecting the sacraments was just beginning to exert that malign influence which resulted in a lamentable division, and took away nearly, if not quite, one third of the members from the parent Society.

The Missions exhibit an increase on the twenty-seven years of seventy-one thousand one hundred and sixty-one; giving an average increase, on the foreign stations, of above two thousand six hundred per year; the number having more than quadrupled in the period mentioned. And these trophies of grace were won from the votaries of heathenism in every part of the world:—from cannibal New Zealand, Tonga, and Fiji; from the West Indies, amidst persecutions and social convulsions; from Africa, despite the bloody-minded heathenism with which missionaries had to contend in the west, and of the wars which ravaged the south, of that degraded continent. The increase of members, in all the Societies under the care of the British Conference, being TWO HUNDRED AND NINE THOUSAND NINE HUNDRED AND THIRTY-SEVEN; the increase alone was only about thirty thousand less than the whole number in Society at the Conference of 1816.

We are by no means disposed to place undue reliance on

these figures. We are well aware that numerical increase is not always a safe test of the real state and progress of a Christian church. Yet, when this increase is steady and continuous, when it extends over a quarter of a century, and is found in a religious communion which has no external means of support, no national endowment or power on which to rely, we think that an increase like this does afford some evidence of vitality in the system that produces such results; a power which attests it to be a living branch of God's universal church.

In closing this portion of our task, we may be allowed to explain why we have not, in the last few years of the narrative, dwelt so frequently and fully as before on the work of spiritual religion. We have given fewer instances of successful ministerial labour, of remarkable conversions, and of distinguished personal piety, than in our earlier volumes. This change has not arisen from any alteration in our views, as to the deep interest and vital importance of such matters; nor has it been caused by any lack of such cases in the material which has passed under our review. Two reasons have directed the course we have taken. Our limits have imposed a restriction, which prevented any considerable expansion of the narrative; but we have been mainly influenced by a strong desire to say as little as possible of living individuals. And this desire has frequently laid a restraint on our pen, which we fear may have sometimes made our reference to contemporaries apparently place them at a disadvantage, in comparison with those who have passed away. If such cases should be found, we hope the motive will be appreciated, and the fact be attributed to its true cause.

BOOK X.

METHODISM: PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE.

CHAPTER I.

THE RECENT AGITATION.

Reluctance
with which
this investi-
gation is
conducted.

GLADLY would we have terminated our investigation of Methodism with the close of the preceding chapter, could it have been done without causing general disappointment, and shrinking from a duty clearly involved in the task we have undertaken.

The events referred to in the title of this chapter, are of too recent date to be compiled into history; and, therefore, this will not be attempted. But it does not follow that no religious use can even now be made of the circumstances which called forth the agitation, and of the painful consequences which resulted from it. Nor do we think that persons interested in the history of Methodism will be satisfied to have that which is, undoubtedly, the most prominent portion of its recent annals entirely ignored. Neither would it be possible to state fairly the character and power of Methodism, or even to glance at its future prospects, without a cursory reference to these matters.

In entering on this uninviting task, we will not indulge in a controversial, much less an acrimonious, spirit. As the matters formerly in dispute have, in the course of Providence, been settled, there is little room for argument. We have no vindictive feelings arising from the remem-

brance of these events. We must, indeed, state facts, some of which are truly lamentable. We must pronounce judgment on several important particulars with unflinching fidelity. But to the utmost of our power we shall avoid giving pain to the living, or irritating the friends of the departed.

It is no part of our plan to investigate and narrate all the causes which led to the extensive commotion of which we are about to speak. But it is necessary to observe that, notwithstanding the extent and violence of this agitation, the great body of Wesleyan ministers were affected by it, only so far as they were led to deplore its character and its results. Devoting themselves to their proper work as Christian ministers, they laboured to promote the cause of Christ in the edification of the church, and the conversion of sinners.

But while this was the case generally, there were a few discontented with their status in the Connexion, and with the conduct of those who usually exercised paramount authority in the decisions of the Conference. They called themselves "the minority;" and concerted plans of opposition and schemes of resistance, which exercised a very unfavourable influence on the Connexion. There is reason to fear that the same spirit existed before the Warrenite agitation, and was not extinguished by the successful defeat of that aggression. It was checked, and held in abeyance, by the Centenary proceedings; but soon after the close of that jubilant period sounds of discontent were again heard, and the progress of insubordination became visible to every one who carefully watched the operations of the Conference. In these circumstances, the eminent individual who stood foremost as the upholder of connexional order and righteous authority, became naturally the object of violent enmity and opposition.

Dr. Bunting's great influence.

We have, in this and the preceding volume, spoken repeatedly of Dr. Bunting, of his character and influential position in the Connexion; and we have done so with great sincerity. Holding his talents and virtues in the highest esteem, we venerate his memory for his work's sake. Yet, as we see plans and means in the light and experience of their results, we may now, with perfect consistency, question the wisdom of some measures, which, at the time, the wisest and best men in the Connexion united to promote.

His extensive usefulness.

Through a long series of years, Dr. Bunting rendered the most essential service to Wesleyan Methodism, by introducing great improvements which were absolutely necessary in its laws and regulations. We adopt the statement of an eminent minister, who had the most perfect knowledge of the subject on which he wrote, and who, referring to Wesleyan polity for thirty years previous to 1841, asserted that "during this period our legislation bears intrinsic evidence of being the production of one superior mind. Other parties may have contributed original suggestions and emendations; but it is obvious that one master hand, for the last generation, has framed the great majority of the Acts of our Conference. Besides many minor regulations, dispersed through our Annual Minutes, the invaluable system of finance, particularly in the department of the Contingent Fund, the entire constitution of the Missionary Society, of the Theological Institution, and of our Sunday Schools, were framed by the same honoured minister. There are two other public documents which have contributed, in as high a degree as the best productions of our fathers, to promote the spirit of ardent piety and high-toned Christian morality in our ministerial community, composed by him; the 'Instruc-

tions to Missionaries,' and the 'Liverpool Resolutions.' These being, by authority, annually read in our District Meetings at home and abroad, and made the subject of serious conversation and prayer, exert a paramount influence in forming the principles, habits, and characters of our ministers, and essentially contribute to the preservation of the primitive spirit and discipline of Wesleyan Methodism." *

We have no doubt of the general accuracy of this statement. But then, who shall estimate the amount of power and influence wielded by Dr. Bunting? If, for thirty years, Wesleyan legislation bore the impress of his mind,—if, for a generation, he "framed the great majority of the Acts of our Conference,"—what could he not do? Let it not be supposed for a moment that we blame the eminent minister for this. We are sure that the state of things which the history of this period exhibits could not have been brought about by the pride, vanity, or ambition of any man. It was Dr. Bunting's pre-eminent ability, his vast administrative talent, which commended his measures to general acceptance.

We regard, therefore, the position in which he is placed by Grindrod, as one fairly earned, and generally conceded to him by the Wesleyan ministry. And we fully believe that if he and his friends had conducted themselves, and the affairs of the Connexion, with angelic wisdom and purity, they would not have averted the shafts of envy, or the violent opposition of self-willed and "unreasonable men." But while admitting all this, was there not an obvious reason why the Doctor should have exercised great self-denial, and an equal reason why his friends and admirers should be satisfied, while he possessed this great influence,

His eminent
ability fully
recognised.

* GRINDROD'S "Compendium," preface, p. xvi.

for him to have a moderate amount of official responsibility and power ?

Causes
which
tended to
vitate Dr.
Bunting's
influence.

We cite one instance. When the Theological Institution was successfully launched, why was it necessary for him to be its president ? Is it said, that he deserved it ? the fact is admitted. Does any one maintain that no other man could command the same degree of confidence and respect ? we fully assent to the assertion. But while we admit there were cogent reasons for the appointment, we gravely doubt and seriously question the wisdom of insisting on it. The greater Dr. Bunting's just and necessary influence, the greater his acquired and consolidated personal authority ; the less desirable was it that there should be anything like a concentration of official authority and responsibility in his hands. We may err, and would speak with deference on a subject of so much delicacy ; but we believe that we have enunciated a sound principle ; and that, if it had been steadily acted on, in the case of Dr. Bunting, it would have produced the happiest results to himself and to the Connexion.

There was one estimable quality of this great man, which, as well as the circumstances referred to, had an important influence on the Connexion. He was a true friend. And we need not wonder that many of his brethren in the ministry became greatly attached to him. Among these were men of purest piety, of highest independence, whose friendship would be an honour and a benefit to any man, however great his character, or exalted his sphere of action. With these, others, not so eminent or so good, gathered around him ; and, like all eminent men in the Church or in the world, he was often surrounded by self-interested followers as well as friends.

Dr. Bunting had also strong political opinions. Not

that he made these prominent in his ordinary action, but there were times when they were fully avowed. This, for aught we know, was perfectly right and proper. His political views were perhaps nearly in accordance with those of the old Whigs, and not far removed from those now professed by what are called liberal Conservatives. They were, however, far from according with those entertained by some of the preachers, and many of the people, in those stirring times when the Reform Bill was projected and carried. We well remember the outcry through the country when Dr. Bunting voted for Lord Sandon at the Liverpool election.

These facts, combined with some frailties of manner in the eminent man himself, together with jealousies arising from many other causes, united to excite a spirit of party among the Methodist ministers, which various circumstances tended to strengthen. But this, as already observed, was checked, and kept in abeyance, during the most brilliant period of Dr. Bunting's career. After the Centenary, however, when there seemed little scope for further legislation, and the great man was entering on his declining years, it became more apparent. Then it was gradually made manifest that some of the preachers regarded the position and influence of himself and his personal friends, as an injustice to themselves. The strong confidence which the great majority of the Conference had in the integrity and ability of their leader, prevented this feeling from being openly avowed, except under strong excitement, and by a very few men of more than ordinary strength of will. But the feeling existed, and continued to increase. When an individual was disappointed by any action of the Conference, the person regarded as the leader of its councils, and the representative of its power, usually came in for the prin-

A spirit of party engendered in the Conference.

cial share of the ill-feeling engendered. Several prominent preachers, whose position was not comfortable with their brethren, although differing materially in their views and sentiments from each other, and having very dissimilar causes of complaint, were all united in one point,—a feeling of dissatisfaction with Dr. Bunting.

In every community those who think and feel in unison will cultivate each other's acquaintance, and such diversity of sentiment will tend naturally to the formation of parties and party feeling. The ordinary means by which this feeling is kept within reasonable bounds, among enlightened people, is free discussion. This places every subject fairly on its own merits; and in every religious society, it is to be hoped, that as truth is mighty and must prevail, so this course of proceeding will ultimately succeed. There were some who almost uniformly opposed the great majority of the Conference in the general course of legislation. Unhappily others, either ministers or laymen, acted very differently. They circulated anonymous tracts among the Wesleyan ministers and people, under the title of "Fly Sheets," of which it is a very moderate censure to say, that they were virulently slanderous, and reflected on Dr. Bunting, his friends, and the proceedings of the Conference and its committees, in the most unmeasured terms. We abstain from quotation in proof of this statement, which all acquainted with these "Sheets" know might be carried to any extent, and confine our observations to two points. Although reflecting so severely on the religious and moral character of the principal official persons in the Conference, they were, from internal evidence, believed to be the production of Wesleyan ministers. They were issued at intervals from some unknown source, and obtruded on

The Fly
Sheets.

Their cha-
racter.

almost every Wesleyan minister, containing slander and falsehood against many of the most eminent of his brethren in the ministry. Connected with statements of this kind there were innuendoes, covert charges, suspicions, and whisperings of a most damaging nature, which very few had an opportunity of testing, and which silently and surely exercised a very dangerous influence. No wonder that these tracts were regarded by right-minded men as a standing disgrace to the body of Christians to which they referred.

The continuance of this state of things for successive years had a most pernicious effect. The minds of ministers were excited and harassed. Those far removed from the metropolis, with little personal knowledge of the men whose reputation was so perseveringly assailed, were many of them placed in doubt as to whether some of these allegations, so plausibly put forth, were not true. A leaven of suspicions and evil surmisings was extensively diffused throughout the Connexion, and the minds of preachers and people were drawn off from their spiritual duties.

The sad results of these conflicting causes.

These and other causes acted so unfavourably on the religious state of the Connexion, that in Great Britain and Ireland there was a net increase only of three hundred and ten members at the Conference of 1846. And at the Conference of 1847, there was a decrease in Great Britain of two thousand and eighty-nine members, and of two thousand nine hundred and thirteen in Ireland. The latter decrease was, however, mainly caused by the famine and emigration. Two such years had never been known to follow each other in the history of the Connexion. At the last-named Conference, therefore, the subject excited deep concern and serious inquiry.

This inquiry, of course, included the "Fly Sheets," their

authorship, character, and evil influence. And the Conference thought fit to protect, by a special resolution, the reputation of the ministers so bitterly assailed, and especially of Dr. Bunting and Dr. Newton. The position of the Connexion was not much improved the following year. At the Conference of 1848, there was a decrease of five hundred and eighteen members in Great Britain, and of one thousand four hundred and ninety-one in Ireland. The spiritual state of the Connexion was again gravely considered, and among the measures suggested as means for improvement, we find the following:—"We further resolve to seek a closer union among ourselves as Christian ministers, laying aside all party spirit and prejudice, that there may be nothing in us that shall, by grieving the Holy Spirit, cause Him to withhold any measure of His gracious influence." *

How happy would it have been for the Methodist ministers and people, if this resolution had been fully and universally carried out! What a host of evils might have been averted, how much suffering would have been prevented, not to speak of the great good that would have resulted! But while the Methodist people were reading the "Minutes," and, aware of the existing differences and heartburnings among their ministers, were hoping that the evils, being acknowledged and deplored, would be speedily removed, measures were actually being devised for promoting "party spirit and prejudice" with tenfold industry and power.

The first week of 1849 announced the forthcoming publication of "The Wesleyan Times" newspaper. The second number tells the Methodists, that "recent events have shown that the party, both lay and clerical, holding the reins of government in Wesleyan Methodism, is dis-

"The
Wesleyan
Times."

* "Minutes," 1848, p. 154.

posed to exercise its power with no gentle hand upon those members of the Conference who constitute the minority, and who deem it their duty to make an unceasingly bold and determined stand against an administration which, they believe, is fatal in its influence on the Societies at large, and which, by its acts, is making Methodism *as it is* much less lovely and blessed than Methodism *as it was*."*

This unpropitious beginning was fully sustained by the future bearing of this periodical towards the governing powers of the Wesleyan Connexion. No other issue could have been reasonably expected. For reasons sufficiently explained in the preceding pages, "The Christian Advocate" ceased to exist: but papers similar in profession, purpose, and spirit, successively appeared, under the various titles of "The Wesleyan Record," "The Wesleyan Chronicle," and "The Wesleyan." Each of these struggled through a brief existence, and sank into oblivion: and "The Wesleyan Times" was generally regarded as one of the same series, having, it was believed, the same editor as the defunct "Wesleyan," and one of the principal shareholders of that paper as its proprietor. With unbounded professions of liberality and devotedness to Wesleyan Methodism, it seldom omitted an opportunity of reflecting on the government of the Connexion, or of patronizing and supporting those who resisted it. Even the "Fly Sheets" received a sort of apologetic support, if, indeed, their allegations were not to some extent justified and maintained.

Its professions and character.

At the beginning of 1849, the first number of a new monthly periodical was also published under the title of "The Wesley Banner, and Revival Record," edited by "Wesleyan Ministers." It was apparently designed for

"The Wesley Banner."

* "Wesleyan Times," vol. i., p. 24.

circulation principally among local preachers, class-leaders, prayer-leaders, Sunday-school teachers, and other members of Society. Among other objects it was avowedly intended to defend the small minority of Wesleyan ministers who generally dissented from their brethren in the Conference, and to expose what they might regard as erroneous in the administration of the Connexion. The extensive communication of these disputable matters in connexion with revival intelligence and Sabbath-school information, soon made its impropriety perceived by its best friends. Even "The Wesleyan Times," while lauding the first number, said, "We expect that it will be decried and misrepresented. It will be said to be the work of men who are aiming to revolutionize Methodism."

"Papers on
Wesleyan
Matters."

One plea for the publication of these serials was the circulation of small monthly tracts, under the title of "Papers on Wesleyan Matters." Their principal object was to counteract the influence of the "Fly Sheets," and to circulate constitutional information respecting subjects in dispute in the Conference. Unfortunately, these generally able "Papers" were also anonymous, a circumstance which gave their opponents an advantage, which they used to the utmost. Another and more serious defect was the intemperate language occasionally employed. Irritated by the unfounded aspersions of the "Fly Sheets," the writers of these "Papers" retorted, in no very measured terms, on their opponents; and it is feared they only aggravated the evils which they were intended to remove. The censure pronounced on the "Wesley Banner" by the Nottingham and Derby District Meeting, and the general tone of feeling manifested by the Wesleyan ministry, clearly showing that the ensuing Conference would take some decisive action for the suppression of the evil against

which the "Papers" were directed, only five numbers were issued.

Under such excitement the Methodist people awaited the proceedings of the Conference of 1849,—that memorable epoch in Wesleyan history. We confine our remarks exclusively to the disciplinary action occasioned by the extraordinary circumstances in which the Connexion was placed. The question being proposed, "Are there any objections against any of the preachers?" the president, the Rev. Thomas Jackson, spoke of the peculiar constitution of Methodism, of the brotherly relation in which Wesleyan ministers stood to each other, and the necessity of maintaining mutual confidence and good-will; charging all his brethren to cultivate Christian love, and the exercise of godly fidelity. A preacher then moved that the Declaratory Resolutions of 1835 be read; a motion which was carried almost unanimously. After the resolutions had been read, another minister, alluding to the "Fly Sheets" as publications which he would not trust himself to characterize, said that Mr. Everett of York was suspected of having a principal hand in them; and that he thought Everett should be sent for.

The Conference of 1849: its disciplinary action.

The Rev. James Everett and the Rev. John Burdsall were accordingly summoned to the Conference, and were severally asked by the president, "Are you the writer, or author, in whole, or in part, of the 'Fly Sheets?'" Each in turn positively refused to answer the question. The president, having advised the Conference to avoid any hasty conclusion on a subject of such serious importance, suggested the appointment of an adequate committee, to consider and report on their case. This was adopted, and a committee appointed, consisting

The Rev. J. Everett expelled: the Rev. J. Burdsall admonished.

of the ex-presidents, four chairmen of Districts, and three other ministers, who were to present their report on Monday. This report gave an extended review of the whole case, and recommended the expulsion of Mr. Everett; and that in consequence of Mr. Burdsall's great age and infirmities, he only be admonished from the chair. The Conference almost unanimously adopted this recommendation. Mr. Everett was expelled, and Mr. Burdsall received a rebuke, dictated by mingled kindness and fidelity, in a letter from the president.

The Revs.
S. Dunn
and W.
Griffith
questioned.

The Rev. Samuel Dunn and the Rev. William Griffith were also subjected to disciplinary examination. Both refused to answer the question respecting the authorship of the "Fly Sheets." That is, they refused to comply with the requirement of the president, to give a categorical reply, Yes, or No, to the inquiry. Each began to deliver a speech in answer to the question. But a few sentences were sufficient to decide the Conference not to receive either of these addresses. They were also implicated in the publication of the "Wesley Banner," which had been strongly censured by their District Meeting.* To meet their case,

* "*Case of the Rev. Samuel Dunn.*—At the annual meeting of the Nottingham and Derby District Committee, charges were preferred against Mr. Dunn, to the effect that, by the publication of a periodical, entitled the 'Wesley Banner,' he had contravened the laws and usages of the Connexion, endangered its peace, and aspersed the character of a large majority of its ministers. The District Committee state in their Minutes, that it was in evidence before them, 'that the tendency of this publication is to promote "strifes and divisions;"—that it greatly "endangers the peace" of our Societies;—and is dividing our people both in sentiment and feeling, of which we have some painful instances in this District.' They thereupon recommended Mr. Dunn to accept a proposition which had been made to him by Mr. Clarkson, to withdraw the charges, on condition that the periodical should be at once given up. But this recommendation, though strongly and

therefore, a special committee was appointed; and they were heard and reasoned with, in regard to their past conduct, and the security they were prepared to give, that they would in future abstain from divisive and agitating measures. But, notwithstanding the opportunities thus afforded, nothing satisfactory to the committee was elicited from either of them. After a very careful consideration of all the circumstances, the committee unanimously drew up a statement, setting forth their judgment as to the conduct of these ministers, and the terms on which alone they regarded it right for them to be continued in the Methodist ministry.

Copies of this report were furnished to Dunn and Griffith, and time afforded them for serious consideration, which they were earnestly exhorted to give to such an important subject. But this counsel was given in vain. A joint letter from to the president was read at the next sitting of the Conference, in which they stated "that they were not prepared to

These
ministers
expelled.

affectionately urged upon Mr. Dunn, both from the chair, and by almost every minister in the Meeting, he positively declined to accept. The District Committee, therefore, having no alternative left to them, resolved that the 'Wesley Banner' ought to be discontinued, and required Mr. Dunn immediately to suspend its publication. He again refused to do this, and appealed to the Conference against the proceedings of the Committee. The Conference received the appeal, and appointed a committee to hear it. But when the committee met, Mr. Dunn declined to appear; requesting to be informed from the president, whether he was to consider himself as having incurred the penalty of suspension, *ipso facto*, by not having answered the questions of the Conference on another subject, on the preceding day. To this inquiry the president returned an answer in the negative. Still Mr. Dunn refused to attend the committee; and as he thus declined to prosecute his appeal, the Conference unanimously resolved to confirm the proceedings of the District Committee in his case."—"Minutes," 1849, pp. 174, 175.

submit to the conditions on which their continued connexion with the Conference was made to depend." The Conference thereupon resolved on their expulsion.* It is stated that the resolution for expelling Mr. Dunn was passed with one dissentient, viz., Mr. Bromley, and that the vote for the expulsion of Mr. Griffith was unanimous. Other ministers were also subjected to inquiry and reproof.

We have narrated these circumstances with brevity, for reasons already stated, notwithstanding their very serious and important character. The separation of three such ministers from any section of the church must be regarded as a very momentous and calamitous action. Variouslly endowed, and differing greatly from each other in intellectual character and acquirements, they were men designed and adapted for a more than ordinary sphere of usefulness in the church. The occurrence, therefore, of any combination of circumstances which separated them from their former religious associates, must be regarded as matter of very painful concern.

This disciplinary action was necessary.

Yet, deeply as this result was to be regretted, we are bound to say, that it was in our judgment necessary and inevitable. This was the conclusion formed and expressed by us at the time;† and after the most careful and anxious consideration, it has been fully confirmed by the extended and more mature investigation of the circumstances during the past twelve years. We do not think it necessary to justify this judgment further than to observe, that these ministers evidently claimed a larger measure of personal licence and freedom of individual action, than

* Appendix X,—Proceedings of the Conference in the Cases of the Rev. Messrs. S. Dunn and William Griffith. ("Minutes," 1849, p. 175.)

† See "Wesleyan Ministers and their Slanderers."

was compatible with their duties as members of the Wesleyan Conference and ministers of the Connexion. Nothing could more clearly prove this fact, than the unanimity with which this disciplinary action was consummated. Wide as was the range of judgment and opinion in the Methodist Conference; friendly as several of the members were to these ministers, and to *some* of the views which they entertained; it was so evident that they had pressed their claims beyond what could possibly be tolerated, that there was not even a respectable minority to throw its countenance over them when the act of discipline took place.

But if these expulsions are to be lamented, as needful ecclesiastical discipline, still more painful were the consequences to the church. The expelled ministers immediately appealed to the Methodist people, the members of other religious communities, and the public, against the decision of the Conference. They employed all the resources they could command. The "Wesleyan Times" supported their cause with an ability and energy which outdid the efforts of the "Christian Advocate" in behalf of Dr. Warren. The "Wesley Banner" followed in the same course, inspired by the strong feeling and unwearying perseverance of its editor. Other periodicals of a religious character, but whose conductors never fully understood the Methodist economy, or approved the principles and successful progress of the system, interposed the full weight of their influence and authority, with all the professions of arbitrators; but with invariable partiality for those who, loud in their professions of liberalism, seemed likely to participate in their views, both with regard to civil and religious politics. It may, indeed, be admitted that what is called the liberal press gave the full weight

Cause of the expelled supported by the press.

of its influence to the cause of the expelled : and this is by no means to be regarded as a matter of surprise. The action of the Conference was taken on a high religious principle, which very few of these writers were likely either to understand or to recognise. Virtually ignoring the professions of religious experience and devotedness, by which alone a man could become a Wesleyan minister, and the relation of our ministers to one another, they treated the action of the Conference as the proceedings of a civil court, and consequently plunged into endless and ridiculous absurdities.

The labours of the press were seconded by the most energetic exertions of the expelled preachers. They threw themselves into the work of agitation with intense spirit and unwearied devotedness. Their writing, travelling, preaching, and speaking in public meetings, exceeded all their previous labours. They were really prodigious, and induced many a godly man to weep over the prostitution of powers to the dissemination of mischief and strife, which might have been productive of the greatest good.

Yet the press and the expelled preachers had a wide field on which to operate. Not only did these three men put themselves forward as victims and martyrs, which of itself always secures commiseration : but they had on their side all those who had been induced to regard the Conference as illiberal and tyrannical ; and all who were disposed to resist legitimate authority, and to clamour for licentious liberty. In a word, the world and the various shades of religious liberals, so called, throughout the country, were on the side of the expelled.

In these circumstances commenced an agitation of the Wesleyan Connexion, a crusade against its government and

ministry ; which, for violence, long continuance, and extensive results, has no parallel in the history of Methodism, nor, it is believed, in any other section of the Church. The copy of the "Wesleyan Times" which followed the expulsion of Mr. Everett, contained thirty-three letters on the subject, many of them professing to come from official persons in the Connexion, some avowedly from members of other churches ; but all uniting in condemnation of the Conference, and some of them denouncing the conduct of that assembly in unmeasured terms.

The Sunday following the expulsion of Dunn and Griffith, they conducted public religious services in the Corn Exchange at Manchester. We copy the account as published in the "Wesleyan Times," to show the spirit then evinced. "On Sunday last, in the forenoon, at half-past ten, in the Corn Exchange, the Rev. S. Dunn conducted the preliminary services, and the Rev. W. Griffith preached to a large and attentive audience, taking for his text Luke vi. 31 : 'Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye also to them likewise.' The preacher enforced the universal observance of this commandment with a power and energy to the hearts of those who listened worthy of the sublime subject on which he dwelt.

A violent
agitation
begun.

"After the sermon, the Rev. S. Dunn gave an account of their expulsion, which wrought so strongly on the already excited feelings of his auditory, that at the mention of the name of the accuser of the brethren, G. Osborn, they almost universally met it with hisses, and most marked evidences of disapprobation. This was also the case with the announcement of the name of T. Percival Bunting, as the person at whose instance the Rev. D.

Walton was examined at the Minor District Meeting. Mr. Dunn observed, that he saw that gentleman in the room, on which the audience rose, and met him with unequivocal signs of displeasure.

“In the evening, the Rev. S. Dunn preached from the prayer of the dying Stephen: ‘Lord, lay not this sin to their charge,’ Acts vii., last two verses. The preacher, without directly alluding to the expulsion of himself and Mr. Griffith, in his discourse, nevertheless, established a strong analogy, in many circumstances, between the case of Stephen and themselves; and showed, from the position in which Stephen saw Christ, that He is peculiarly interested in the treatment which His ambassadors receive from men, from councils, and from Conferences.

“After the sermon, Mr. Griffith made a statement similar in substance and general features to that made in the morning; observing, in addition, that their expulsion had been effected by the Conference with closed doors, to prevent the inquiry of the public and the press; but the day was coming, when those doors *must* be thrown open, and when the doings of the Conference would be made manifest to the world!”*

We owe an apology to an eminent minister, and a highly respected gentleman, for repeating the mention of their names in such a connexion as this; but it is necessary to show the unscrupulous character of the proceedings, and the *animus* which they called forth. Nor must the reader forget, that these almost universal “hisses,”—“marked evidences of disapprobation,”—and the rising of the congregation to meet a gentleman “with unequivocal signs of displeasure,” took place in connexion with the preaching

* “Wesleyan Times,” vol. i., p. 539.

of the Gospel, and the exercise of Christian worship, on the Sabbath day.

This was but the beginning of a course of agitation which extended to every part of the Connexion, with indescribable virulence and power. The weekly organ of the party advised the holding of meetings in every Circuit, and the opening of subscription lists for the expelled ministers; and this advice was extensively taken. Some of the Circuits in London, Ripley, Derby, Halifax, Rochdale, Salisbury, Norwich, Manchester, Ashbourne, Bramley, Swaffham, at an early date, held meetings to sympathize with the expelled and support their claims; and other places followed. The columns of the "Wesleyan Times," from week to week, were crowded with advertisements from office-bearers and members of Society, full of expressions of sympathy and offers of support to the complaining parties.

Encouraged by this wide-spread sympathy and assistance, the three ministers rose in effort with the prospect of success, and attended meetings and preached sermons as often as possible. Appearances seemed so much in their favour, that, on the thirty-first of August, a great meeting was held in Exeter Hall, for the purpose of affording Everett, Dunn, and Griffith an opportunity of bringing their case before a metropolitan audience. Mr. John Kaye, the proprietor of the "Wesleyan Times," and of "Worsdell's Pills," was called to the chair; and the three ministers delivered their statements, after which a series of resolutions was adopted. The first expressed the judgment of the meeting, that the acts of the Conference toward Everett, Dunn, and Griffith, were at "variance with the ancient laws and usages of Methodism, and with the principles of the New Testament." The second con-

demned the proceedings of the Conference, "as being a direct violation of the essential principles of civil and religious liberty;" and called on the Methodist people to adopt measures for preventing them pursuing a career of intolerance and exclusiveness dangerous to the Connexion. To secure this object a committee and officers were appointed, to correspond with the Circuits throughout Great Britain, to ascertain whether the opinion of the Societies was favourable to a general meeting for deliberating on the present crisis in the Connexion; and the said committee was empowered to receive subscriptions

Avowed
purpose of
the expelled
ministers.

Strengthened by this organization, the expelled ministers boldly put forth an avowal of their purposes and plans. It bears date the day following the Exeter Hall meeting, and says, "At present we intend not to join any particular section of the Christian church. We shall embrace all opportunities to preach the glorious Gospel of Christ. We shall hold a series of meetings in the principal towns of the empire. In these meetings we shall continue to make a statement of our case; shall encourage officers and members to keep their present relations to Methodism; shall urge the Body to petition Conference to rescind the anti-Wesleyan and anti-Christian law of 1835; to conduct its annual proceedings with open doors; to appoint laymen alone as treasurers of all its funds; to discontinue at the ensuing Conference the nomination committee, and henceforth to choose the connexional committees by ballot; to admit the right of the Methodist Societies in all official meetings, such as Leaders' and Quarterly Meetings, to petition or memorialize Conference on any subject bearing, in their opinion, on the interests of the Connexion; and to require that a large and independent committee be chosen for the purpose of investigating the state of the

connexional funds, as far back as the committee may deem necessary."

These demands proposed an entire revolution of the Wesleyan system, the introduction of a virtual democracy; and pronounced condemnation on the Conference in respect of its laws, its disciplinary action, and fidelity in the expenditure of funds intrusted to its care for sacred purposes. These were henceforth to be the war-cry of the party. For this Reform, Methodism was to be moved to its depths, and agitated from one end of the island to the other. It is but just to say, that they fully carried out their purpose. Never in British history, for any civil or religious purpose, was the population of this island so pertinaciously appealed to, as respecting this cry of "Reform." The *liberal* weekly press generally gave it their support; the "Wesleyan Times," in addition to its own incessant outpouring of exciting matter from week to week, culled the most effective selection from its contemporaries, and sent it forth a second time to work the intended fermentation in the public mind; whilst the three ministers, in season and out of season, mightily laboured to secure their object.

Several ministers and laymen interposed letters in various periodicals, and published pamphlets defending the disciplinary action of the Conference, and showing the irreligious tendency of the agitation. These were extensively useful in communicating information to candid minds, and in preserving great numbers from being led into discontent and alienation from Methodism, by the incessant appeals and wide-spread excitement. Still, the agitation continued, and was intensified by the discipline which its progress rendered necessary. Mr. John Harrison, editor of the "Wesleyan Times," was

Continued
violence and
extent of the
agitation.

expelled from Society in the Islington Circuit; and a similar course was adopted toward other persons who had rendered themselves prominent in the agitation at different places. But none of the connexional institutions was assailed with more virulence than the Missions. The Mission House management was constantly canvassed in the "Wesleyan Times," in a manner calculated, if successful, to destroy all confidence in its officers and committee.

The agitation had made such progress, that in March nearly four hundred delegates from different Circuits assembled in London, and held meetings four successive days in Albion chapel, Moorfields. Here the Report of the committee appointed at the Exeter-Hall meeting was read and received, and a series of resolutions passed, echoing the sentiments in the manifesto of the expelled ministers, and appointing a committee to conduct and extend the agitation, which was carried on with undiminished energy. At the Missionary Anniversary in Exeter Hall, a sufficient number of the malcontents obtained admission to disturb its proceedings; and, in defiance of all decency, to hiss, with vulgar energy, every speaker obnoxious to the party. In this state the Connexion approached the Conference of 1850, the Reformers highly exulting in their progress and power. "We cannot," said the "Wesleyan Times," "but look on the present aspect of things with pleasure. The end approaches, and by-and-by we shall be able to lay aside the weapons of this warfare, and sing, with a noble and emancipated people, the animating song of victory." *

At the March meeting of delegates, at Albion chapel, a

* "Wesleyan Times," vol. ii., p. 416.

committee was appointed to communicate with the Conference, for the purpose of obtaining the reform for which they struggled. This committee sent a letter to the Conference, stating the object for which they were appointed, and requesting to be informed when the Conference, or a committee appointed by it, would receive them. A reply, signed by the President and Secretary, informed them that the Conference was always "prepared to receive and consider, with respectful attention, any communications in the way of memorials or otherwise, addressed to it, on matters touching either local or connexional interests, provided that such memorials or other communications proceed from members of Society in their individual capacity, or from meetings duly called and constituted according to our existing rules." The answer continued, that the Conference had "good reason for doubting whether any Society, or Circuit, or body of trustees, in its collective capacity, appointed any individual as a delegate to the meeting held in London on the twelfth of March last." Regarding that meeting, therefore, as organized on divisive and disorderly principles, the Conference refused to make any appointment for meeting the committee, or to receive any memorials from it.

Notwithstanding all this violent aggression, the limited extent to which the office-bearers of Methodism were affected is shown by the fact, that no memorial whatever was received from three hundred and seventy-seven of the four hundred and forty-three Circuits in Great Britain. From the sixty-six Circuits which sent memorials, twenty-two requested organic changes, which the Conference said they could not entertain, and which no Circuit-meeting ought to have adopted. The great majority of the remainder were silent as to any serious grievance or com-

Limited extent to which the great body of Methodism was affected.

plaint ; and neither requested nor suggested any extensive alteration or improvement. This result is remarkable. Looking over the pages of the "Wesleyan Times," or listening to the current reports of the day, it might be supposed that the Connexion had turned away from the Conference with one accord ; and yet only five Circuits in every hundred could be roused to ask for improper changes. At this Conference the Rev. James Bromley, who had virtually separated himself from the ministry, by refusing to appear before a special meeting of the Bath District Committee, called on his case, was finally removed from the Connexion. The agitation had not been sufficiently extensive, prior to the March visitation, to affect the number of members in Society to any serious extent. The increase reported this year in Great Britain was about ten thousand.

During the sittings of this Conference, the delegates met again at Albion chapel, and earnestly debated their position and prospects. The principal issue of these conversations was a determination to withhold all contributions to the connexional funds, and even to the support of the ministers, wherever, by maintaining order and rule, they resisted the will of the discontented, who were called "the people." This resolve was urged with great spirit, at considerable length, in a leader of the "Wesleyan Times :"—
 "The contest of the people with the Conference must now begin *in earnest*. There must be no mistake respecting the people's purpose. There must be no shrinking from the means necessary to accomplish that purpose. The Conference is obstinate ; the people must be firm. The Conference will not yield an inch ; the people must not abate their demands. The Conference becomes more stringent ; the people must become more resolved. The Conference is bent upon using its utmost despotism ; the

The party
 resolve on
 stopping the
 supplies.

people must develope their power. The Conference need pecuniary supplies; the people must withhold those supplies." * This *dictum* was henceforth supported by the general teaching and exhortation of the party, and was developed in its course of action.

The result of this decision was the prosecution of the agitation with tenfold virulence. All such members of Society as were brought under the influence of the agitators were earnestly counselled to adhere to the "Old Body," to maintain their connexion with their respective Cassettes, but to refuse all contributions to Connexional funds and to the support of the ministers. The unreasonableness and wickedness of such conduct, already sufficiently exposed,† led, of course, to disciplinary action. Methodism, in common with other Christian churches, regards the support of the ministry as a scriptural and religious duty; and, although it does not dictate the sum that any individual shall give, it states the amount necessary for each member to contribute, except in extreme poverty; in which case no law whatever is applied. Under the influence of the advice given by the Central Committee, the Reformers generally refused to contribute. It followed that, at the visitation of the Societies, when spoken to as to the usual contributions, members would reply, "No, I give nothing." And when asked, "Cannot you afford to observe our rule?" the reply was, "Yes," or, "I do not say, I cannot afford to do so; but I shall not." This took place in thousands of instances, sometimes by whole Classes at a time. The proper and righteous result was, that such persons were refused tickets, and ceased to be recognised as members of the Society. In numerous cases, also, active and zealous men, who had

* "Wesleyan Times," vol. ii., p. 594.

† See vol. ii. p. 272.

been perverted by this agitation, were induced to hold meetings for promoting the views and objects of the Reformers, and advising and encouraging members to withhold their contributions. These were, as circumstances allowed, brought to trial, and, unless shielded by the vote of a factious Leaders' Meeting, expelled. Such a course of proceeding, although inevitably following the perverse line of conduct which had been adopted, was productive of great mischief and irritation. This distressing year of Methodism thus passed away,—a season of deep affliction to all spiritually-minded men, “a day of gloominess and of thick darkness.”

In this case, as in the agitation of 1835, every intelligent observer will perceive the vast discordance between the beginning and the end, the cause and the effect. Here, some preachers were suspected of publishing slanders on their brethren, and others were known to be connected with a publication regarded as divisive and objectionable. As these persons gave no sufficient satisfaction to the Conference in reference to the past or the future, they were expelled. But this was emphatically a preachers' question. The people were not concerned in it. When these ministers were arraigned before the Conference, they claimed no privilege for the people,—*the people* were not thought of. Yet, no sooner were they expelled, than, perceiving that the personal plea would not be sufficiently operative, large claims were made for the people, claims never before mentioned. Hence, it was insisted that laymen alone should be treasurers of Connexional funds, and that private members should have a right to be present at all Leaders' and Quarterly Meetings. These means, used with great tact, ability, and perseverance, produced astonishing results throughout the country. The manner adopted in prosecut-

ing this crusade, enabled the party to conduct it with great effect. As collections were made everywhere for the support of Reform, in large congregations, and generally under very excited feelings, there was no lack of funds; and the ordinary receipts were supplemented, in July, by the proceeds of a bazaar, said to amount to above two thousand pounds. In this state of the Connexion, with the constant cry of "Reform" in their ears,—“No supplies;—No surrender;—No secession!”—the Methodist people looked forward with more than ordinary interest to the approaching Conference, and most earnestly implored the blessing of Heaven on the coming session of their pastors.

The gloom which hung over the Connexion was greatly increased when it was known, that the District returns showed a decrease of members, on the year, to the extent of fifty-six thousand and sixty-eight. What portion of this number left the Connexion under the influence of the Reform mania, we cannot tell. We are strongly impressed with the belief, that a large part of the decrease arose from the insufficiency of additions to the Societies, to supply the losses occasioned by ordinary backslidings, emigrations, and deaths. No effect of this movement was more marked at the time, nor has any left a more painful remembrance on the mind, than the spiritual paralysis which it inflicted on the Societies brought largely under its influence. Methodist congregations ceased to look and to feel as Methodist congregations. The word fell on them without power. A blight rested on the Connexion, and in some localities years passed before it was quite removed, and the Societies recovered their usual tone.

Alarming
extent of
the decrease
of members.

In these circumstances the Wesleyan ministers, and laymen accustomed to take an interest in the public proceedings of the Church, felt placed under the most grave

Grave
responsibi-
lities of
Wesleyan
leaders.

responsibility. What was to be the end of this hostile and potent aggression? What was their duty in these trying and critical times? All the contingencies of the case were carefully considered; the possibility of further loss was admitted; the weight of popular odium and reproach was known to be increasing. Yet, so situated, thousands of godly men,—ministers and laymen,—with little means of concert, and less opportunities of communication, were led earnestly to desire the unswerving maintenance of the legitimate authority of the Connexion. If Methodism was to perish, they desired it to perish without the sacrifice of any principle of its polity; without reversing the discipline which they believed to be righteous, and without conceding anything to that which they considered a decidedly irreligious agitation.

Important
meeting of
ministers
and laymen
at Man-
chester.

As it had been constantly asserted that the laity were with the Reformers, and as it became desirable, prior to the ensuing Conference, to have a free and friendly conversation between the ministers and leading lay friends, the President invited a great number to meet him and his brethren, at Manchester, on the sixteenth of July. About one hundred laymen from every part of the country, and a great number of ministers, attended. The meeting was held in Oldham Street chapel, and was everything that a hearty Wesleyan could desire. The President, Dr. Beecham, gave a lucid exposition of the essential principles of Wesleyan polity, and invited free and friendly discussion. The meeting occupied two whole days, with two sessions on each day. Differences of opinion on minor points were freely expressed; but there was a blessed union of heart and judgment throughout. At the close, a declaration was drawn up, 1. Deploring the agitation, and expressing a conviction that the aspersions poured on the

Conference were false and calumnious. 2. Expressing a deliberate opinion that it was the duty of the Connexion faithfully to adhere to these principles of Wesleyan Methodism, which secure our connexional union, provide for the due exercise of the pastoral office, and guarantee the purity of the ministry. This declaration was signed by nearly six hundred laymen of influence and consideration in every part of the country. The effects of this course were very salutary: it checked the vaunting of the agitators, and gave renewed spirit and hope to timid Wesleyans. Nor was the action of the Conference less beneficial. They passed resolutions expressive of pleasure and gratitude for the lay declaration, and adopted others respecting the agitation, calculated to afford important advice to ministers and members, and to inspire the Connexion with courage and confidence.*

Declaration
of the lay-
men: its
salutary
effects.

The Conference appointed a committee to consider the suggestions contained in the several memorials presented to it, and authorized the president to convene a suitable number of leading lay friends to confer with him and the committee on the results of their inquiry. This committee entered on their duty on the third of February, 1852, and prepared a report. The President then summoned a large number of leading lay friends to meet in the Centenary Hall on the seventeenth of March. For two days, the various subjects of Connexional law and discipline were freely and fully discussed with great harmony of judgment and opinion; and the result, after being considered by the Conference, was printed in the "Minutes" as the future regulations of the Connexion on the subjects to which they refer.† By these resolutions some

Revision of
Wesleyan
disciplinary
laws.

* Appendix Y. ("Minutes," 1851, pp. 179-183.)

† "Minutes," 1852, pp. 156-168.

important emendations were made in Wesleyan law, some objectionable enactments were removed, and a decided improvement was introduced. These proceedings, and especially the candid and hearty union thus proved to exist between the Wesleyan ministry and laity, had the happiest effect on the Connexion.

Grateful
testimonial
to Drs.
Bunting and
Newton.

Another circumstance which tended to the same result was the presentation of a united testimonial to Drs. Bunting and Newton. Increasing years and infirmities having obliged these ministers to retire from the active duties of their profession, the leading Methodist laymen considered the usual supernumerary allowances altogether unsuitable to the position which men so eminent had occupied, and the great services they had rendered to the Connexion. After some previous concert, a meeting was held, when it was determined to raise a testimonial fund of seven or eight thousand pounds, to be paid in equal moieties to the Missionary Society and the New Auxiliary Fund, chargeable with annuities to Dr. Bunting and Dr. Newton of two hundred pounds per annum, with a smaller sum in reversion to some members of their families. Between seven and eight thousand pounds were raised, and the annuities paid during the lives of these eminent men. This tribute to the worth of those who had been selected as special objects of libel and slander, was a timely check to the promoters of agitation.

But nothing could soften the rabid spirit, or moderate the tone, of the assailants of the Conference. As their prospects of success in their efforts to subdue the constituted authorities of Methodism, and revolutionize the discipline of the Connexion, became more hopeless, their language and professions were more violent, and their conduct more unscrupulous. But reason and religion re-assumed their ascendancy. Acts of discipline, long

delayed in deference to the excited state of the public mind, were now called for by those who a few months before would have been driven into rebellion, had discipline been exercised. The Reform mania gave neither quiet to the conscience, nor confidence to the souls of sincere Christians; and they earnestly appealed to their leaders and ministers, "Are we never more to have peace?" The spell was broken, and Methodism, despite every effort to prevent it, was restored to her right mind.

At length the time arrived when the Connexion might repair its losses and regain its position. Through this agitation, and the cry of "Stop the Supplies," the loss of members, and the reduction of ministers which became necessary, there had accumulated a deficiency on the connexional funds of about fifty thousand pounds. This sum might have been easily raised; but this was thought unworthy of the Connexion. It was therefore proposed to raise about double the amount, in order to remove all existing encumbrances, and to appropriate a moiety of the contributions to the extension of Methodism. A Relief and Extension Fund was projected, and an amount nearly, if not quite, equal to that anticipated was raised and appropriated.

The pecuniary losses of the Connexion more than met by the Relief and Extension Fund.

We have said that the *decrease* of numbers at the Conference of 1851 was fifty-six thousand and sixty-eight. We give the statistics for the next ten years:—

Year.				Decrease.
At the Conference of 1852 the <i>decrease</i> was				20,946
"	"	1853	"	10,298
"	"	1854	"	6,797
"	"	1855	"	3,310

	Year.	Increase.
At the Conference of 1856	the <i>increase</i> was	2,977
„ „	1857	6,260
„ „	1858	6,996
„ „	1859	15,704
„ „	1860	17,516
„ „	1861	13,155

Results of
the agitation
shown by
numerical
returns.

These figures clearly show the progress, extent, and continuance of the influence of the agitation. As the numbers are taken at the March visitation of the Societies, it follows that the loss or increase reported in any year arises out of the state of the Connexion in the year preceding. The agitation in 1850 produced the decrease given in 1851. The causes in operation in 1851 occasioned the loss stated in 1852. So the remains of the excitement existing in 1852 contributed to the decrease in 1853. Here we incline to believe the actual loss arising from this cause ended. There might have been, and undoubtedly were, expulsions and secessions on a very limited scale after 1852; but the decrease stated in 1854 is not so great as that occasioned from year to year by deaths, removals, and backslidings. After the end of 1852 we only find the result of the aggression in the prevention of the usual and ordinary success of a Gospel ministry. And from that time, that paralysing power rapidly passed away. In 1855 all losses by death and otherwise were supplied, and there was a net increase of nearly three thousand. This increase has been steadily enlarged from year to year; so that the aggregate addition to the Connexion in the five years ending with 1860, is nearly five times that of the corresponding addition in the five years ending with 1849.

This is a conclusive proof that the fiery ordeal through

which Methodism has passed, has in no degree impaired its power of evangelical aggression on the darkness, ignorance, and sin of the country. It retains all its living energy and adaptation for proclaiming the Gospel of Christ, and recovering the fallen out of the snare of the devil.

Nor has the spiritual efficacy of Methodism been maintained by the sacrifice of its principles, or the revolution of its system. Neither have these been blindly upheld by either ministers or people. The system denounced as an instrument of tyranny, the laws declared to be "steeped in apostasy and unbelief," have been carefully and candidly examined by hundreds of men, ministers and laymen, as honest and upright, as intelligent and religious, as any of their censors. And what is the result? While some minor modifications of discipline and law have been introduced, all the essential principles of the Connexion have been retained and confirmed by the hearty and unanimous approval of the present race of Wesleyans. And with unfeigned gratitude to God for the spiritual privileges and religious economy which their fathers, under the providence of God, have handed down to them, the Methodists of the present day will transmit them, unimpaired, to their children, as the most scriptural heritage of blessing the world has seen.

What other religious denomination but the Wesleyan could have sustained such an aggression, and, after three or four years of intense popular assault and persecution, have risen to a higher state of godly efficiency, and the enjoyment of a more perfect peace and union? As if no element in the successful resistance of this wicked crusade should be wanting, the ministers who were the marked objects of slander, calumny, and reproach, were honour-

Methodism shown to retain all its spiritual vigour and efficiency.

Wesleyan Methodism unimpaired and improved by this fiery ordeal.

ably provided for by the spontaneous efforts of a grateful people, and passed away to their everlasting reward in the possession of every honour which a religious community could give. The names of Dr. Bunting and Dr. Newton will be embalmed for ages in Wesleyan hearts and memories.

Every spiritually-minded member of the community, grateful to God, as he must be, for the preservation of the Connexion, cannot but feel a bitter pang of anguish at the remembrance of those who were destroyed. Who can tell the number of simple-minded pious souls, driven from the Church into the world and sin under the malign influence of this agitation? Nothing to our mind is more terrible than the account which must one day be rendered for this slaughter of souls. Nor should the effects of this fearful season on the ministry be forgotten. The amount of obloquy and insult—attended by severe personal privation, and, in a few instances, even by the peril of life—endured by the ministers, induced in several instances premature physical infirmity, and some gentler spirits sank beneath the pressure, and a season of unusual ministerial mortality ensued.

We have marked, with an anxious eye, every step in this tragic portion of Wesleyan history. We have seen ministers entrapped by designing men into circumstances of difficulty, and made to appear ridiculous. We have known others, whose judgment and temper have failed under the irritation produced by the perverse conduct of unreasonable members. But, although we have shrunk from no effort or sacrifice, and have anew waded through all the volumes of abuse and slander written and spoken during these years of trouble, nothing has shaken our religious approval of the disciplinary action of

the Conference of 1849. Nothing has since occurred to weaken, in any degree, our hearty attachment to the Wesleyan economy. We regard it as rising out of these fires of persecution, more lovely, more pure, more mighty for the promulgation of the Gospel at home and abroad, more worthy of esteem and respect, and more entitled to the confidence of Christian men, than in any previous portion of its history.

CHAPTER II.

PRESENT AND FUTURE RELATION OF WESLEYAN METHODISM TO THE STATE AND THE RELIGION OF THE NATION.

ANY attempt to invest Wesleyan Methodism with a political character would be absurd. Persons gathered into a united society from the middle and lower classes, simply under the influence of religious conviction, and kept together by no bonds but an earnest desire to obtain spiritual religion, and to promote its extension among others, would never entertain the same political sentiments, any more than they would have the same views of a given philosophic theory, or a disputed question in science. Politics, in their party meaning, have no place in Methodism. To say, therefore, that a man is a Wesleyan Methodist, no more indicates to what political party he inclines, than it points out his worldly profession, or the style of his dress.

Yet the system promotes order and liberty.

Yet, it must not be inferred, that Wesleyan Methodism has no influence of a political character on the public mind, or that it is of no account, when considered in regard to the State. The fact is patent, that religious people are the undoubted strength of the state in which they are found. Whether a religious man be a Conservative or a Liberal,—the two leading, distinctive parties in our land,—he will certainly be found supporting *liberty* and *order*, the two grand elements of good government. A clerical friend of ours, some time since, used these two words to point out what he regarded as the distinction between the political parties we have named.

"A Conservative's watchword," he observed, "is 'Order and liberty.' Order first, and then as much liberty as can be given without infringing it. The Liberal," he said, "reverses the terms, and cries, 'Liberty and order.' Liberty first, and then as much order as can be secured compatibly with it." Undoubtedly there have always been men in our country who have carried out their views on these points to the most extravagant extent. Some, fixing their attention on the maintenance of order, until it has filled up the field of their vision, would almost exult in the announcement made some years since, "Order reigns in Warsaw,"—an order of Death rejoicing over the grave of Liberty; whilst, on the other hand, worshippers of the idol Liberty would exalt the object of their devotion at the expense of order, religion, justice, and truth.

We have known Methodism long, and have carefully observed the conduct of its members in times of great political excitement, as well as in seasons of tranquillity; and we avow our settled conviction, that there are few, if any, disposed to sacrifice public order to secure a larger measure of liberty; and that, if possible, there are fewer still who, for any measure of order, would surrender the rational liberty with which they are invested. This has been the general character of the Methodists throughout the hundred years of their existence as a people. The great mass have always evinced a steady, unwavering attachment to the throne and the established institutions of the country; have ever manifested great moderation in seasons of excitement; and have uniformly given their influence for the removal of abuses and the promotion of social improvement.

In prosecuting this course of conduct they have not been

influenced by any teaching of a political character, but by motives strictly religious. Their public teaching, their social intercourse, and their whole organization, tend to bring the principles and power of scriptural truth to bear with salutary effect on the opinions and conduct of every member. They learn to submit themselves to every ordinance of man, not merely as a concession of individual liberty for the public good, but as a religious duty, "for the Lord's sake." Whatever may be urged by earnest political partisans, we regard this, not only as the most sound and influential principle which can operate on the mind of a citizen, but as the only one that can be fully relied on for conserving sound existing institutions, and preparing the public for progressive developement, and social and national elevation.

The Bible
the cause of
Britain's
elevation.

Were it necessary, these propositions could be proved as fully as the nature of the subject admits. It has been acknowledged from the throne, by successive monarchs, and is the deep inwrought conviction of the wisest and best among all classes in the country, that Great Britain holds her present position among the nations of the earth, mainly through the influence of the Bible on the people. This truth is held so extensively and strongly, that it may be pronounced the national sentiment. And if it be true, as we shall show, that the Methodist people are taught to make the Bible, and the Bible alone, the ground of their faith; and that their organization affords means for giving this teaching effect, equally at least with any other religious body; it will follow that they are as likely as any to be brought under the salutary influence of scriptural truth.

We do not wish to leave this statement without support, but to show, briefly, what these means are. Referring,

then, to the information given in a preceding volume,* as to the appointment of ministers, local preachers, and class-leaders, we direct attention to the working of the system. A Wesleyan Circuit is an association of a given number of Societies, spread over a certain portion of the country. It usually contains one or more principal towns, with the adjacent villages and rural population. Some of the largest cities and towns are divided into several Circuits, each including its portion of the suburbs and neighbouring country. In the metropolis there are twelve Circuits; in Manchester, seven—six English and one Welsh; in Leeds, four; in Liverpool, three, including the Welsh; and in several other large towns, two. In an ordinary Circuit, there may be from five hundred to a thousand members, and two or three ministers. The ministers devote the principal part of their Sabbath ministrations to the several town chapels in rotation. They also preach in these, and the village chapels, on the week-day evenings. In such a Circuit—say of eight hundred members—there may be twenty town and village chapels. Almost every one of these has its separate Society; that is, its given number of members, of which such chapel is the centre. Every Society is divided into Classes. Each Class, containing from twelve to twenty persons, is placed under the care of a leader, who meets them once a week for religious instruction and prayer. A weekly Leaders' Meeting is held by one of the ministers, when any case requiring special oversight or disciplinary action is reported and considered. In a Society of eight hundred members, there will be from fifty to sixty Classes spread over the whole surface of the Circuit; each individual member is consequently under the religious care of a leader in his own locality. Besides these, there

The means by which Methodism renders scriptural truth operative.

Circuit arrangements and religious agency.

* Vol. i., book iii., chap. iii.

will be from twenty to thirty local preachers, every one of whom, having given evidence to the minister and his brethren of his personal piety, acquaintance with scriptural doctrine, and ability to preach, is appointed to preach in the several country chapels on the Lord's day. This extensive religious agency is supplemented by prayer-leaders,—persons of approved piety and gifts, who meet their neighbours in larger or smaller meetings, for prayer,—and by a goodly number of Sunday-school teachers, whose duties are universally understood. Our day-schools are now exercising a most important influence; nor should the Benevolent and Dorcas Societies be overlooked as important agencies. This brief outline of the operation of a Wesleyan-Methodist Circuit shows the various ramifications of its teaching, power, and influence. And whether the system be regarded with approval or disfavour, it must be admitted to possess great power of reaching the public mind, and of imbuing it with scriptural truth.

Importance
of numbers
to the influ-
ence of a re-
ligious body.

It is, however, very evident that the importance of such a people to the state, or to the religion of the nation, must depend, not merely on their character and organization, but on their numbers. There are in Great Britain and Ireland five hundred and forty-one Circuits, such as we have sketched, on which are employed about fifteen hundred accredited ministers, and probably fifteen thousand duly appointed local preachers, with from twenty-eight to thirty thousand class-leaders. Is it possible that such an amount of agency can be regularly inculcating scriptural truth and scriptural morality, without rendering important benefit to the state? Then, let the results of this agency be considered. It was reported to the Conference of 1861, that the number of members in Great Britain was three hun-

dred and nineteen thousand seven hundred and eighty-two, and in Ireland twenty-three thousand five hundred and fifty-one; making a total of three hundred and forty-three thousand three hundred and thirty-three, more than one-third of a million; every individual being under effective pastoral oversight, which rebukes and admonishes minor delinquencies, and visits flagrant disorder and proved immorality with expulsion.

Number of
Wesleyan
members
and congregations.

These persons are not isolated by any concealed pledges, or by any slavish subjection to any spiritual domination, either at home or abroad, so as to have objects, expectations, or interests separate from the rest of the population. As citizens,—as members of the body politic,—they are one with the community at large. They are united by the dearest bonds of relationship, as well as by a common interest with the public, and are accordingly knit into the very sinews of the state.

These facts are not adduced to propitiate our rulers, or seek favour from those who sit in high places. Methodism arose into existence under very adverse circumstances. It has pursued its way, “waxing stronger and stronger,” under great discouragement; and its members are thankful to God,—and, under God, to a just and tolerant government,—for the civil liberty and religious freedom which they, in common with all in our highly favoured country, enjoy. It is for the advantage of the state itself, that Methodism claims to be recognised, and its existence and important influence admitted, by our rulers and the nation. It is time that the government and the Parliament of Britain began to know that the stability and support which the religion of our land affords to the throne and all our institutions, does not arise from one denomination, however favoured, endowed, or exalted. We make no complaint, utter no innuendo,

against the Established Church: we would not alienate a fraction of its wealth, or abate a jot of its prestige or power. But we do claim for the three hundred and forty-three thousand enlightened and religious Wesleyan Methodists, and for the million more who constitute our congregations, a recognition of their influence in contributing to that security and power which religion confessedly renders to the government of the nation.

Having shown the relation of Methodism to the state, a few facts and observations will be sufficient to exhibit its importance as an element of national religion. As a congregation can scarcely be found in which the members of Society form more than a fourth of those who regularly or occasionally attend, it follows that there are a million of persons, principally adults, in addition to the members, who sit under the Wesleyan ministry. This is unquestionably an important part of the population of the country, and is sufficient to bear its own evidence to every impartial inquirer. But, besides this, Wesleyan Methodism, although not far advanced in her educational progress, had, in 1860, upwards of sixty-eight thousand children under religious tuition in day schools, and four hundred and seventy-four thousand and nine hundred in Sunday schools. As a carefully prepared series of Catechisms, containing a clear exhibition of Christian doctrines, with Scripture proofs, adapted to the ages of the children, is generally taught in these schools, we regard these institutions as important elements of instruction, exerting a wide and continual influence on the public mind.

Wesleyan
schools and
home mis-
sions.

There is another part of Wesleyan agency which merits particular attention. The great numbers of individuals, of what may, with strict propriety, be called the *lower* classes, who are without adequate religious instruction, in our cities,

large towns, and in some populous rural districts, present, perhaps, the most gloomy aspects of Britain's religious condition. This neglected class has forced its wants on the Christian sympathy of the Wesleyan Church; and great and praiseworthy efforts have, during the last few years, been made to bring into action an effective home-mission agency. There are forty-four young, energetic Wesleyan ministers engaged in this noble enterprise. Amongst the most destitute inhabitants of Spitalfields, Manchester, Sheffield, Bristol, Newcastle-on-Tyne, Liverpool, Bradford, Wednesbury, Wolverhampton, and numerous other places, these devoted men minister the Gospel in the cottages and dwellings of the poor, and bring to their knowledge the truths of salvation.

We admit, and lament, the limited extent of this agency. But, assured that it is of the right kind, and that the evils it is intended to counteract and remove are the greatest and darkest blots in the religious and moral character of our country, we rejoice that this amount of agency is employed. The course of action which has put it in motion is so devised as to advance with cumulative power, until the means of supply bear some adequate proportion to the claims which for extended ignorance and wickedness justly make on a religious community so numerous and enlightened as the Wesleyan Methodists.

It will not be just to close these statements without referring to the peculiar training of the members of this religious community, which, it is believed, qualifies them in a specially effective way for diffusing religion among their neighbours and the public. The different agencies to which we have referred are not merely designed to foster religion in the members of Society, and to afford them means of succour and aid in seasons of temptation and

Peculiar training of Wesleyans favourable to their religious influence.

trial. This wide range of agency, the manner in which it is generally employed, and the spirit which it tends to keep alive and active in the Connexion, are eminently aggressive. From the beginning Methodism has, with more or less success, maintained a continual assault on ignorance and sin. Why was it that, even before the death of Wesley, every minister who evinced unusual evangelical ardour or Christian zeal, was either lauded or stigmatized as a Methodist? Why did Dr. Chalmers, in recent times, say, "Methodism is Christianity in earnest?" Was it not because its religious organization is directly calculated to promote godly zeal and active usefulness?

The social union among the Methodists is directly religious. Their Class Meetings unite the small companies composing them into a brotherhood. Hearing from week to week each other's godly experience, sympathizing with each other's afflictions or trials, produces a oneness of spirit, most favourable to united and harmonious action in the service of the Saviour. These several sections are brought together in Society Meetings, Love-feasts, and other similar assemblies. The Prayer Meetings greatly promote the same feeling. There, not only professors assemble, but the public; and earnest supplications are addressed to Heaven, for the increase of piety in believers, and the conversion of sinners. This, indeed, is not unfrequently the burden of their prayer. Poor Christian men wrestle earnestly with God for the salvation of their neighbours; and as almost every member was at first taken by the hand by some pious brother, and thus encouraged to give himself to the service of Christ, so he, in his turn, tries his persuasion and advice on some of his ungodly companions. A religious zeal is thus cultivated; concern for the extension of the Redeemer's kingdom in the world is recognised, and acted on; and

that religious earnestness, which high and impartial testimony has declared to be characteristic of the Societies, is created and maintained.

Yet, although this statement is undoubtedly correct, we do not believe that the spiritual earnestness of Methodism could have been maintained, unless it afforded opportunities of individual usefulness, and, indeed, taught and trained its members to this, as a religious duty. We will make no invidious remark, will utter no reflection on any other church. We are in perfect charity with all. But does not Christian charity weep daily over Britain, on account of the sterling piety, sanctified intellect, and religious warmth of heart, existing in many churches of our land, without any appropriate sphere of action, or opportunity of employment?

Importance
of Method-
ism to the
government
and religion
of the
nation.

This is not the case in Methodism. Here there is work for every one, and every one is expected to work. Every degree of talent, every measure of intellect, every grade of power, and almost every peculiarity of disposition, may find suitable opportunities of doing good. And the discipline to which every member is subjected, prepares him, to some extent at least, for useful exercise. Having from the beginning to speak of his religious desires, feelings, and state, in his Class Meeting, and, as he becomes experienced in the things of God, to pray there, and with the sick, as well as on other occasions, the Methodist acquires a power of utterance which draws out and cultivates his powers for doing good. All these exercises are of a spiritual and experimental kind. Few religionists are less able to define or to defend their theological doctrines, or the peculiarities of their system, than Methodists. They are not schooled in controversy; but in the art of teaching sinners the way to flee from sin and to find salvation in

Christ, they are the best instructed people in the world. Here is the spiritual power of Methodism, the grand secret of its continued existence and success. It insists on the experience of personal godliness ; and calls on all to exert themselves, as God hath given them ability, to promote the common salvation.

With this truthful and honest exhibition of the character of Methodism, and of its adaptation for usefulness ; with the fact before us, that nearly half a million of such persons, ministers and laity, are thus united to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land ; will it be thought unreasonable or vain, if we claim that the system be recognised as of national importance by the state, and expect it to be regarded by all as an integral and important section of the Church of God in these islands ? These claims are just, whoever repels or gainsays them ; and, in due time, they will be recognised in all their righteous reality.

But, whatever importance we may attach to the religion of this country, Great Britain is only the head and heart of a vast empire ; an empire on which the sun never sets,—which extends to every zone, and every longitude. And who can estimate the importance of Methodism and its religion to a very great part of this empire ? No statesman or philosopher will ignore the importance of religious influence and sympathy, as the most mighty bond for holding peoples in combination and harmonious action, although divided from each other by rival interests, great distances, and even difference of language. In order to show the influence which Methodism is capable of exerting on our distant colonies, we must notice a few of the most prominent of them in succession.

Canada has always been regarded as a vast country, con-

taining important provinces, and which, considering its great extent, immense resources, and geographical position, should always be maintained, not only as an integral part of the empire, but in friendly and hearty union with Britain. Yet no one is ignorant that there are great hindrances to this desirable and necessary state of things. A large portion of the inhabitants are of French descent; Popery is very prevalent among them and some other classes in the country. All who have paid attention to public affairs, during the last thirty years, will remember, that scenes of rebellion, and deeds of treason and blood, not to allude to minor troubles and causes of disquiet, have stained the history of this country. What is to prevent a repetition of these disasters? We point to Methodism, as at least one healing influence,—one powerful means of a peaceful and a happy union with the inhabitants of this territory. Originally there were two sections of Methodists in the colony; one, properly speaking, Canadian; the other consisting of Societies and congregations, gathered and maintained by the labours of British missionaries.* These two sections are now happily united, and the Methodism of these provinces possesses all the power and influence which unity can impart. In those Societies there were, at the last Conference, forty-eight thousand two hundred and eighty-one members, and above five thousand three hundred on trial for church membership. These are cared for by three hundred and five ministers, and above one hundred probationers for the ministry. Who can calmly consider these things, and be insensible to the influence which these churches, and a far greater number who, only being members of the congregations, are not included, must exert in the promotion of piety, order,

Importance of the Canadian Colonies to Britain, and of Methodism to the maintenance of this union.

* See *ante*, p. 403.

loyalty to the throne, and attachment to the mother country ?

Rapid rise of
the Australian
colonies.

The rapid rise of Australia, with its several colonies, has become a proverb. Within the memory of men not yet old, this wide-spread country was only known as a receptacle for felons at Botany Bay. Now its numerous colonies are daily increasing in population, commerce, and wealth. The emigration which has led to these results is an exodus the most wonderful in modern history ; and is probably a prelude to the entire subjugation of the southern hemisphere to the Anglo-Saxon race.

Extensive
Wesleyan
agency in
these colonies.

A new and rising colony is a most unfavourable soil for religious truth, and one where much labour may have to be spent in vain ; yet even here Methodism was not unsuccessful. Happily, missions were established in the older colonies before this great influx of settlers commenced ; and when new and important settlements were formed, the openings they presented were entered with a promptitude and energy equal to the emergency. At length, the number of ministers and members became so great, that after several other expedients to conduct such large and important religious operations successfully, at a distance so remote from the seat of government, it was resolved to place the Australian Societies, and the Missions in New Zealand, Fiji, Tonga, and other neighbouring islands, under the care of an annual Conference, to be held in Australia. And now, throughout the colonies and Mission stations in that vast territory, all the apparatus of Methodist agency, of which we have spoken, is in active and continual operation. There are Classes and class-leaders, Sunday-schools and teachers, prayer-leaders and visitors of the sick, local preachers and ministers, meetings for local preachers and leaders, Quarterly Meetings, District

Meetings, and an annual Conference,—indeed, Methodism, in all its departments, in full operation and efficiency. By the last returns, there were under the care of this Conference thirty-three thousand nine hundred and sixty-four members, with seven thousand six hundred and fifty-seven on trial. The number of ministers was one hundred and ten, with forty on probation.

Nor is this far distant local gain obtained by the sacrifice of connexion with the parent community. The Australian Conference is called an affiliated one. It holds just such a relation to the British Conference as a grown up son to a parent. The colonial annual assembly of Wesleyan ministers exercises full authority over all its ministers and members. But while the annual nomination of its president, as is the case in Canada, rests with itself, the ratifying of that nomination is with the home Conference. And so as to legislation, the Australian Conference has full power to make any rule for its ministers and members; but if it be disallowed by the next British Conference, then it ceases to operate. The Australian Conference has also the full oversight of the Missions confided to its care; but the general Mission Fund largely contributes to their support. By this prudent arrangement, therefore, all the advantages of local government are secured, and all the benefits of assistance and connexion with the parent Society permanently maintained.

The old established Missions to Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, and the adjacent territories, have also been placed under a similar arrangement. Here an affiliated Conference has been formed, and a local jurisdiction, akin to that already described, established, in connexion with the parent Conference. Unpropitious as is the climate, and unfavourable as are many circumstances affecting the people in those

The Meth-
odism of
Newfound-
land, Nova
Scotia, &c.

latitudes, this section of the great Methodist family has no mean status in its number of ministers and members.

The Eastern British American Conference is composed of one hundred and thirty-two ministers, and has under its care fifteen thousand four hundred and ninety-seven members, with upwards of fifteen hundred on trial.

The affiliated
Conference
of France.

Another affiliated Wesleyan Conference is formed in France. The Methodist Mission to that nation has for many years been invested with peculiar interest. Our former desperate antagonism to that country, and the vast commercial and social intercourse which now exists between the two nations, render some moral and religious bonds of union of very great moment. A Mission was maintained there for many years; but the work was not so efficiently conducted as could be desired; nor was it agreeable to the taste and feelings of the French people. They said, "We are not heathens; why send a Mission to us? It is true that we stand in great need of an effective evangelical ministry, but we do not want *missionaries*." France has now a Conference of its own; and, although, from the very peculiar political and religious condition of the country, Methodism has to labour under serious disadvantages, it is nevertheless preparing to occupy the position of a national institution, and must soon be regarded as entitled to that honourable distinction. When the thorough Protestantism, the progressive character, and the elevating tendencies of the system are considered, its existence and progress in this independent manner, in such a country as France, will be regarded as highly favourable to the cause of scriptural religion and rational liberty in that land. The numerical strength of French Methodism is not equal to its moral power. It has one thousand five hundred and nine members, and twenty-one ministers, six

on ministerial probation, besides the usual amount of lay agency.

Other parts of Methodism will, probably, before the lapse of many years, require a similar arrangement. The South African Missions, for instance, comprise three Districts, nearly sixty ministers, and above six thousand eight hundred members, having access to very important colonial possessions, and an immense territory occupied by intelligent and energetic native tribes. Western Africa, also, may, at no distant period, require a similar policy. There were, in 1861, in the Districts of Sierra Leone, the Gambia, the Gold Coast, Ashanti, and other parts of Guinea, about thirty ministers, and about eight thousand six hundred members. These may also, at no very distant day, require to be placed under one or two affiliated Conferences, and thus have increased power of aggression on the darkness, cruelty, and superstition of that still benighted portion of the world.

We might speak of the importance of Wesleyan Missions to the West Indies, where between thirty and forty thousand church members have been gathered into Christian communion, and where the curse of slavery, in its worst forms, has been removed by the combined influence of this and similar institutions. Mention might also be made of our missionary operations in Ceylon, Continental India, and China,—countries where well-nigh one-third of the world's population, wrapped in spiritual darkness, are just becoming sensible of their real condition. But we forbear. A religious organization in Britain, which, without government influence, or any resources but those supplied by the Christian principle and spontaneous benevolence of the Wesleyan people, has, in the last ten years, spent one million sterling, and employed the continued labour and

The prospects of the African Missions.

General character of Methodism.

energy of four or five hundred devoted men, in the godly enterprise of evangelizing the world, commends itself to the approval of every rational mind.

We avoid farther detail ; but we earnestly invite the serious attention of every statesman and philosopher, every lover of his country and of his species,—all, indeed, who feel an interest in agencies for the diffusion of knowledge, truth, and religion,—to this subject. Let Methodism be closely and candidly investigated in its doctrines and discipline, its character and progress, its history at home, or its Missions abroad, and it will commend itself to every impartial mind as an able, persevering, and successful agency for the promotion of scriptural religion,—a true and living branch of the universal Church of our Lord Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER III.

THE METHODISM OF THE FUTURE.

THE rise and progress, the character and history, of Methodism, its struggles and conflicts, labours and successes, from the earliest efforts of Wesley to the present time, have now been detailed. We have seen it drop into the soil of English hearts, as a grain of mustard-seed, to germinate and grow, until thousands in every part of the country rejoice to sit beneath its shadow, and its branches reach to the ends of the earth.

The Methodism of the past age warrants bright hopes for the future.

With what feelings the reader has perused this narrative we know not; but our admiration and gratitude to God have been greatly excited, while pondering the progress of the Connexion through its various struggles, to its present large proportions and extensive range of influence. And the mind has turned from this pleasurable contemplation of the past to an equally joyous anticipation of the future. Chastened by affliction and disaster, encouraged by enlargement and success, we have every reason to believe that the noblest deeds of Methodism have yet to be achieved, and the brightest pages of her history yet to be written. We confidently expect a glorious future for the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion.

Thoughts and expectations like these should not be regarded as unreasonable or useless. If, in one hundred and twelve years, Methodism has arisen from two individuals to its present state, what may not be reasonably hoped respecting its progress as it speeds onwards in its

aggression on the sin and ignorance of the world? Without some great and general unfaithfulness, unparalleled successes and enlargement must result from her further evangelistic operations. Instead, therefore, of treating such hopes of a glorious future as idle and vain surmisings, we should well ponder the suggestion which they offer, and the duties which they impose. If such success is possible, how may it be secured? If there are great difficulties in the way of its attainment, how may they be surmounted? What lessons does the past history of Methodism teach as to how we can in future avert such dangers as have assailed her, and gain for our beloved Connexion a larger extension and usefulness? These inquiries have been very carefully considered, and the conclusions to which they have conducted us will form the subject of our final chapter.

Great principles of Methodism to be maintained.

We have no sympathy with those who, while extolling the Methodism of the past, and exulting in its success, think its principles should be changed, and its organization remodelled, in order to increase and perpetuate its triumphs. We fully believe that the first lesson to be learnt by the rising Wesleyans of the coming age is, the duty of conserving all the essential elements of the Methodism of their fathers.

Requisite pastoral authority to be continued.

The first of these principles, to which attention is directed, is that which secures to the ministers of Christ proper power and authority for the discharge of those spiritual functions specially committed to their charge by the great Head of the Church. We take the view of the subject from a lay stand-point, and write with perfect independence. Having already given our reasons for the views we advocate,* we have not now to discuss the question at length. God has laid on the ministers of Christ spiritual responsibilities

* See vol. ii., pp. 162-177.

which require the possession of the highest spiritual power in His Church. This is a first principle in Wesleyan Methodism, and we trust it will always be maintained. The Christian Church is a spiritual kingdom, of which Christ is the supreme Head. He has appointed, "as it hath pleased Him," persons to stations of trust and responsibility in subordination to Himself. The separated ministry, according to the uniform teaching of the New Testament, is the first in responsibility, and, of course, should be so in authority. The supreme administrative and executive power in the Church must centre either in the minister or in the laity. To speak of its being equally divided between the two, is vain and misleading. In seasons of tranquillity and peace, it has almost always been practically exercised conjointly by the ministers and officers; but in times of excitement and strife, the ultimate court of appeal must be composed either of the ministry, or of the laity. There can be no effective co-ordinate authority between these two classes, when the laity outnumbers the ministry by a hundred to one; nor is there a vestige of authority for such co-ordinate jurisdiction, *in spiritual matters*, in the New Testament.

For these reasons, we trust this principle will be maintained in Methodism as long as the sun and moon endure. It is essential to the continued existence and prosperity of the community,—essential both for the ministry and the laity. It is necessary for the spiritual purity of the ministry. The relation of a minister to the people of his charge is such as will always render it unsafe to make them his judges in any case of real or supposed delinquency. Individual partiality for the man will lead some to improper leniency; so that parties and divisions would be created in the Church, and impurity tolerated in the ministry. It is

Necessary
to insure
ministerial
purity and
godly dis-
cipline.

very well for the laity to have the power, as they have in Methodism, to impeach any minister immoral in conduct or unsound in doctrine; but the uniform experience of the Connexion has proved, that the collective ministry should be the judges and arbiters of ministerial conduct.

The certain maintenance of a righteous and godly discipline among the laity, equally demands the upholding of ministerial authority. There are numerous cases in which a member of Society is so circumstanced toward his brethren, that no effective disciplinary action could be expected towards him, were the judicial power in their hands. Supreme disciplinary authority ought to be exercised by the ministry, to whom, indeed, the Scriptures have undoubtedly committed it.

Its beneficial operation in the past history of the Body.

We hope, therefore, that a proper degree of pastoral authority will always be awarded to the Methodist ministry. It has many times saved the Connexion from the action of insidious evils, and especially in seasons of excitement and disorder; and it will ever be necessary to the continued safety and prosperity of the community. It is, indeed, now an essential part of the system, and we believe its exercise is surrounded with sufficient guards to insure its proper administration. If more protective measures are requisite, let them be devised; but by all means maintain the pastoral power of the ministry in its full force and integrity.

The connexional principle must also be maintained.

A second principle, which we regard as necessary to the continued prosperity of Methodism, is that which secures connexional unity. This may impose considerable self-denial, and not unfrequently occasion local inconvenience. The circumstances, means, habits, and inclinations of persons are so unlike, that a uniform connexional rule will sometimes bear hardly on the Societies in some Circuits, or be contrary to the views of those residing in others. Nor

is it always possible, by any amount of careful legislation, to avoid these inequalities; but they are a very slender set-off against the immense advantages which a connexional union imparts. Methodism could never have resisted the opposition, out of which it has come so triumphantly, had it not been a Connexion. This has given it compactness and power. It has breathed a community of soul into the Methodist people, and imparted a conscious spirit of unity. A Methodist is not only sure of hearing the same doctrine and having the same discipline in every Society, however remote, but he feels at home, and the ministerial itinerancy tends greatly to increase this unity of spirit.

A third principle essential to the continued success of Methodism, is the preservation intact of the authority of the District Committees. We do not wonder that those who would destroy our system, have made such violent assaults on this point. It is the sheet-anchor of the Wesleyan economy. Abandon or weaken the authority of District Committees, and for eleven out of twelve months Methodism must be without any efficient government. Never were the leaders of Methodism more evidently guided by a Divine hand than when they divided the Connexion into Districts, and invested the several District Committees with supreme power in their respective localities during the intervals of Conference. The Magna Charta of Methodism was signed, when the Lord Chancellor of England, in 1835, gave his celebrated judgment in favour of the validity and authority of District Committees. These must be permanently upheld in all their integrity.

The itinerancy must also be maintained. We are aware of its inconveniences, expensiveness, and defects. We admit that it presses hardly on ministers in various ways. We know there are peculiar advantages derivable from a

It is also essential to maintain the authority of District Committees.

The itinerancy of the Methodist ministry also necessary.

located pastorate ; but the good resulting from the itinerating of the Wesleyan ministers infinitely outweighs its unfavourable effects. This has been the grand agency which has reared up Methodism to its present position and power. Let no rude hand interfere with its continued operation.

As well as
the primitive
mode of
appointing
ministers.

The old-established mode of selecting and appointing ministers is incapable of amendment. We heartily rejoice that Methodism has an efficient and well-conducted Theological Institution ; but we have had fears whether, on this account, superintendents have not sometimes recommended candidates for the ministry, whom they would never have ventured to propose had there been no Institution. The Institution was never meant to be the means of introducing men into the ministry who could not be respectable preachers without it ; but for the improvement of suitable candidates by a sound and liberal education. Let the persons recommended by superintendents and Quarterly Meetings be only such as commend themselves, by their piety, energy, ability, and aptness to teach, and the advantages of the Institution to such men will make them all that Wesleyan ministers ought to be.

Yet some
modification
of the
economy
desirable.

But while we are intensely anxious to maintain all the essential principles and usages of Methodism, as necessary to its future prosperity and extension, we are persuaded that some minor changes may be made, which will more fully adapt an ecclesiastical economy to its high vocation, and greatly contribute to enhance its usefulness. In every section of the Church of Christ in active operation, and zealous in promoting the conversion of the world, there are found two distinct departments,—the spiritual, and the temporal or financial. Though sometimes very closely united, and occasionally apparently blended, yet these in their nature are separate and distinct.

The first of these truly constitutes the kingdom of God. It includes the ministry, the subordinate official agency, and the private members of the Church. Here Christ rules by His Spirit. The ministry is responsible to Him; each spiritual office-bearer, according to his measure and degree, partakes this responsibility in his own sphere, in the administration of this spiritual kingdom. Here representation has no place; representation is treason against the King of Zion. The minister is not the servant of the people, bound to do their will, because they approved his appointment as a minister, and contribute towards supplying his temporal wants. He is responsible to Christ, and bound under fearful penalties to do His will. The leader does not sit in a Leaders' Meeting to speak and vote according to the will of his Class, but as their teacher and guide, to whom they are bound to defer. He himself has to act as one whom God hath placed in the Body as it hath pleased Him, and who must be faithful to Him by whom he is appointed. This is the true scriptural ideal of a Christian Church. All grades of offices and people, being "knit together in Him," and imbued with His Spirit, unite to work out the will of their Divine Head.

A spiritual Church the kingdom of God.

There is also a temporal or financial section in the Church, the affairs of which are subject to a different arrangement, and in which the contributors to the temporal sustentation of the various requirements of the community have legitimately a voice and influence. This was recognised in the earliest period of Christianity. No sooner had the exigency of the times, and the liberal contributions of the pious, created a fund, and required its distribution, than the apostles said, "It is not reasonable for us to leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men, whom we may appoint

The financial business subject to a different management

over this business." When collections were ordered, by apostolic authority, to be made in Gentile churches for the pious poor at Jerusalem, the apostles did not themselves disburse the amount. But Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "When I come, whomsoever ye shall approve by your letters, them will I send, to bring your liberality to Jerusalem." (1 Cor. xvi. 3.) The propriety of this lay influence in the financial affairs of the Church is now fully recognised in Methodism. But the manner of its recognition, and the gradual and almost accidental way in which it was brought into operation, may well justify the inquiry, whether it is even now adjusted on the best principles, and working in the most effective manner. The great thing to be secured by this organization, is the best possible appropriation of the funds in a manner which shall most strongly enlist the sympathy of the Church with their objects, and promote a disposition to contribute to their support.

Suggested
appointment
of a general
committee
of review.

We do not object to the present plan of appointing laymen on connexional committees by the choice of the Conference, as having signally failed in either of these respects. But we think that, so far as it has been successful, the success has arisen from the high character and ability of the men, and not from the excellence of the plan. For this and other reasons, we therefore ask, Is there not a more excellent way? One obvious defect in the present mode is, that the choice of the lay members of the committees, except in one or two instances, lies with the Conference, and not with the laity. And, therefore, although the high personal character of the individuals may be a sufficient pledge to all reasonable men of their ability and fidelity; in seasons of uneasiness or excitement, the plea, that they are selected by the ministers, and not by the persons whose contributions support the

funds, will always be a source of inconvenience and reproach.

It seems, therefore, that a change may be effected, which, without violating any scriptural or connexional principle, will remove every difficulty, and introduce a more effective plan of operation. Let the Conference appoint a committee, as heretofore, composed of a select number of ministers and laymen, to form an executive committee for the administration of each fund. And then let each District Meeting elect a minister and a layman, to form together a committee of review; which shall sit with the executive committee of each fund, preparatory to each Conference, for the purpose of reviewing its proceedings in the past year, and for proposing, if necessary, recommendations to the Conference respecting the future.

This plan, or some other devised for the same object, would remove existing anomalies and inconveniences, and afford every part of the Connexion a fair insight into its financial affairs. It would also enable each of the persons who take a long and expensive journey to the Conference, to sit on the committee of every fund, instead of being limited, as at present, to one or two. And it would remove all ground of complaint from the most captious as to the proper distribution of connexional monies. It will do more than this; it will more widely distribute connexional influence. Unless we greatly err in our interpretation of God's providential government during the last half century, Heaven is bringing into active operation a wider range of agency both in the Church and in the world. We seem rapidly approaching an age of mediocrity. The time when great men and great names bore the burden, and sustained the public interests, in Church and State, is fast passing away. These are now sustained, not

Advantages
of this plan.

by the masses,—we do not fall into that error,—but by a far greater number of able, devoted, and zealous men; none of them, perhaps, individually so great, intellectually or practically, as the great ones of the past age; but on the whole, from their numbers and aggregate ability, more mighty in council and action. We must not attempt to resist this movement. We must not endeavour to accomplish, by a limited aristocracy, the work which Providence has devolved on the pious, wise, and energetic members of the Connexion generally. By the means suggested, these would be called from every part of the country, to take their share in the financial deliberations of the Connexion; and, as a necessary consequence, would carry back to their respective localities a deep interest in the various connexional funds, and a hearty sympathy with their objects. If something of this kind were wisely arranged, it would most beneficially affect the Methodism of the future.

Some more effective means necessary to enforce the claims of our funds.

We are, however, very deeply convinced, that some more popular means should also be devised to give greater financial support to Wesleyan institutions. We do not believe there is a parallel in the country to the aggregate amount of money annually raised in Wesleyan congregations, for connexional home purposes, with so small a portion of application, reasoning, and persuasion. What do our people generally hear or know of the religious importance and duty of affording regular pecuniary support to the General Education Fund, the Institution, the Schools, the Chapel Fund, the New Auxiliary Fund, or, indeed, any other of our important objects? Methodism is essentially social in its character. The Methodists are eminently a people of meetings, and speeches, and social gatherings. Yet although we have meetings and speeches for every local object; although Sunday schools, country

chapel trusts, and even much less important objects, can call our people together, seat them at a social tea, or call forth their heart and soul by earnest reasoning and stirring appeal; it is a strange fact that for those great connexional objects there is no voice, no meeting, no hearing. Those of us who have taken a deep interest and active part in Methodism, and to whom the several branches of our financial economy are as familiar as the Lord's Prayer, are prone to forget how large a proportion of our own Societies have recently come among us, and are necessarily ignorant of all these matters. There are scores of thousands of Methodists whose average term of union with the Societies is less than seven years. These do not acquire a knowledge of the nature and claims of our funds intuitively, and it is certain that they are not taught. Is it wise to allow the continuance of such a state of things?

Our Missions have prospered gloriously, and why? Because members have been taught their duty, and have had weighty and religious reasons assigned for its performance. Every measure of eminent intellect and power of the Connexion has been statedly or occasionally consecrated to the support of this holy cause; hence its rapid progress and wide extension. But are not the instruction of our rising ministry, the education of our children, and our other established connexional objects, worthy of some such special teaching and attention? Would it be an extravagant measure, if the Conference were to recommend that once in the year, in each Circuit, a meeting should be held for the special purpose of bringing the claims of our home work before our people? It may not be wise at present to enact a peremptory law, or to prescribe at first any precise plan: but surely the magnitude of the interests involved requires that something of the kind be attempted!

We have no doubt whatever, that if Methodists generally had the circumstances and requirements of the several funds fairly and fully explained, they would support them to an extent commensurate with the position of the Community and its rapidly increasing responsibility. We are aware that there is a feeling in some quarters favourable to the apportionment of the deficiency of the funds *pro ratâ* over the Connexion. Indeed, we once heard a chairman of a District gravely propound the consolidation of all connexional funds, and levying the amount as a poll tax. Such an idea is, of course, unworthy of serious notice. But there are good reasons for believing that we have gone quite far enough in that direction. The Children's Fund we regard as a most righteous and necessary measure, and capable of being sustained and defended on the soundest principles. The New Auxiliary Fund might, we have thought, have been arranged differently with advantage; but its object is so just and good, and the manner in which its claims have been put forth so moderate and unexceptionable, that we believe it is still rising in the esteem of the Connexion. We hope both these institutions will be permanently maintained in their present form.

Impropriety
and impolicy
of *pro ratâ*
assessment.

But before anything like an extension of the assessment principle is attempted, it is right to inquire how far it is warranted by Scripture. We have not been backward in maintaining the just powers of the ministry in every department of the Church. The ministers have not only scriptural duties and responsibilities in matters purely spiritual, but also in those which refer to temporalities and finance. It is the duty of the pastorate to point out the objects which require monetary support, and to enjoin compliance on the ground of reason and religious duty, and on the principle, that Christian men are required to render to

the cause of God "as God hath prospered" them. But no minister or collective ministry has a right to say what amount any individual ought to give, or shall give, to any religious object; and consequently no such demand can be levied on any number of individuals. "Was it not thine own?"—"Was it not in thine own power?"—is the language of the apostles respecting the wealth of Christian men, even when the requirements of the Church were very great. No authoritative assessment was made, a voluntary contribution was the only acceptable offering. The Church is, therefore, on scriptural principles, shut up to the use of reasoning and religious appeals for obtaining the necessary funds. The minister can exhibit the nature and extent of the requirement; but this has to be urged upon the judgment, heart, and conscience of the people by instruction, reasoning, and religious exhortation. And this will always be found the most wise, religious, and effective means of procuring the necessary pecuniary supplies. A proper means for applying those motives and powers is what in our judgment is required to inaugurate an increased measure of success in the future career of Methodism.

Another element conducive to the future success of Methodism is the recent Home Mission movement. The heathenism of our home population has never yet been adequately exposed. The depth of sinful degradation in which masses of our countrymen are engulfed is terrible. The evil is as wide-spread as it is intense; and corresponding efforts to disseminate scriptural truth, and to bring the saving power of the Gospel to influence those so deeply fallen, must be made by every denomination which claims to be regarded as a section of the Church of Christ in this country. This measure is as yet in its infancy, and requires considerable improvement

Importance
of extended
support to
Home Mis-
sions.

before it can be regarded as a permanent institution in Methodism. And there are one or two points in the organization, which we could have wished differently arranged; but we may be in error. The movement, however, has thus far, thanks mainly to its talented and indefatigable secretary, worked well. We have no doubt that the Home Mission, with a multiplied agency, will advance in the real Methodist labour of conveying the Gospel not only to those who need it, but to those who need it most. To a wider extent than ever it will spread scriptural holiness through the land, and exhibit Methodism to future generations infinitely more useful and glorious than it now appears.

Other suggested improvements.

Another feature may be noticed as susceptible of some modification conducive to the future prosperity of the Connexion. No one will suspect us of disrespect for the senior ministers of Methodism. No man values or honours them more highly: our dearest friendships are among them. But the question has pressed itself on our judgment, whether position and office in the Wesleyan Connexion are not too closely identified with seniority. Why should men have the charge of important Districts or Circuits, after the honourable labours of a life have crippled their energies and diminished their powers? Why should this be done, when younger men, mature in judgment, are standing by, able to do the work more efficiently, and without inconvenient tax on their body or mind? This topic is well worthy the grave consideration of the Conference; and if the future of Methodism is to have all the advantages which Providence has provided for it, some alteration will, most assuredly, be made in respect of this practice.

We have a deep conviction that in these and some other respects, which need not now be specified, changes may

be made which will greatly promote the prosperity of the Connexion. But, if we attach importance to these emendations, they do not constitute the ground of our hope. The Wesleyan Connexion is a spiritual body: if it is to be more eminently useful and successful, it must be more eminently religious. This fact should be admitted, and allowed to influence the two great sections of the Connexion.

We do not hesitate to avow our strong conviction that the Wesleyan ministers are, in all the great requisites for the Christian ministry, equal to the clergy of any denomination in the kingdom. Yet who does not admit that increased devotedness and more zealous consecration to their great work is possible, and would greatly increase the fruits of their labour? Who does not know that more eminent individual holiness would add to the power of their ministrations? Nor can the most devoted admirer of the Conference be insensible to the fact, that a more uniform subjection of mind to the teaching and influence of the Holy Spirit would remove blemishes from their deliberations, and vastly increase their godly influence. The Wesleyan Conference need not blush to be placed in comparison with any council or synod of Christian ministers on the face of the earth; but when tested by the requirements and laws of the word and Spirit of God, there are sufficient reasons for humility, and for an earnest desire after spiritual improvement.

Urgent necessity for increasing holiness.

Still more loud and urgent are the calls addressed to the laity, enforcing increased godly fidelity, and more spiritual-mindedness and purity. An irreligious Methodist Society cannot continue to exist. Irreligious men may be members of Society; but without the presence of men truly religious, no number of persons could long cohere as a Methodist Society. Their social and peculiar services so fully and constantly recognise experimental religion, that no mere

opinions, formalism, or habits, will induce a whole community to submit to their restraints, and to perform their duties, in the entire absence of genuine piety. In the ratio, therefore, of sterling godliness in the Methodist laity, is the spiritual power and influence of the Body. Every unspiritual, carnal member is an element of death in the Body,—detracting from its religious efficiency. How important, then, is the growth of personal piety to the progress and success of the Connexion! Methodism arose out of an enlightened and religious effort to spread scriptural holiness throughout the country. It has steadily pursued this object through evil report and good report; and, in the process of its history, has all but perfected its organization, and removed every prominent defect from the system; and it now presents itself to the Church and the world, more than ever prepared to prosecute its mission with resolute energy and increased success.

Concluding
observations.

A thousand times has it been said, Methodism has performed its mission, and is about to wane, and pass away! Never! Methodist ministers and people of a future day may be so unfaithful to their calling and the Divine purpose, that God may remove the candlestick out of its place; but if they follow the example of their Founder and his successors, the triumphs of their evangelical career will never terminate until, in the language of their own immortal Hymnist, Methodism

“ Fills the earth with golden fruit,
With ripe millennial love.”

Nor will the Connexion cease to be a living, influential, and successful portion of Christ's universal Church, until the canon of time is completed, and all the affairs of this sublunary world are closed by the scenes of judgment and the day of God.

APPENDIX.

A, page 3.—*Number of Members, &c.*

TABLE OF NUMBER OF MEMBERS AND CIRCUITS FROM 1816 TO 1861.

YEAR.	GREAT BRITAIN.	IRELAND.	FOREIGN STATIONS.	TOTAL.	CIRCUITS IN GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.
1816	191,680	28,542	21,097	241,319	356
1817	193,670	21,031	23,052	237,753	359
1818	195,101	19,052	23,473	237,626	356
1819	196,605	22,580	25,150	244,335	361
1820	191,217	23,800	27,442	242,459	362
1821	200,354	23,538	28,678	252,570	363
1822	211,392	22,718	29,758	263,868	364
1823	219,398	22,039	31,411	272,848	365
1824	226,939	22,047	32,540	281,526	373
1825	228,646	22,077	32,334	283,057	380
1826	231,045	22,514	32,960	286,519	383
1827	237,239	22,599	34,892	294,730	388
1828	245,194	22,760	36,917	304,871	394
1829	247,529	22,846	39,660	310,035	396
1830	248,592	22,897	41,186	312,675	399
1831	249,119	22,470	42,743	314,332	408
1832	256,272	22,899	43,849	323,020	408
1833	279,170	24,403	45,786	349,359	407
1834	291,939	25,614	48,304	365,857	411
1835	290,988	26,037	54,226	371,251	423
1836	293,132	26,434	61,803	381,369	426
1837	292,693	26,023	66,007	384,723	433
1838	296,801	26,244	66,808	389,853	436
1839	307,068	26,383	72,727	406,178	453
1840	323,178	27,047	78,504	428,729	461
1841	328,792	27,268	84,234	440,294	464
1842	326,727	27,630	88,315	442,672	471
1843	331,024	28,004	92,258	451,286	474
1844	337,598	28,409	98,511	464,518	479
1845	340,778	27,926	99,609	468,313	482
1846	341,468	27,546	100,050	469,064	485
1847	339,379	24,633	100,303	464,315	489
1848	338,861	23,142	97,451	459,454	492
1849	348,274	22,221	97,746	468,241	496
1850	358,277	21,107	97,861	477,245	498
1851	302,209	20,815	98,011	421,035	502
1852	281,263	20,040	101,338	402,641	502
1853	270,965	19,608	100,828	391,401	502
1854	264,168	19,233	94,420*	377,821	504
1855	260,858	18,749	63,607†	343,214	506
1856	263,835	18,952	65,261	348,048	509
1857	270,095	19,287	64,775	354,157	516
1858	277,091	19,406	64,848	361,345	520
1859	292,795	19,731	63,406	375,932	524
1860	310,311	22,860	62,904	396,075	532
1861	319,782	23,551	63,540	409,230	541

* The apparent decrease this year was occasioned by the transfer of the members at the Missions in Canada and the Hudson Bay Territories to the Canadian Conference.

† The apparent decrease of 30,813 this year was caused by the transfer of 19,397 members to the Australasian affiliated Conference, and of 13,136 to the British American (Eastern). There would otherwise have been an increase of 2,220.

GENERAL VIEW OF THE NUMBER OF MEMBERS IN SOCIETY, AND OF MINISTERS IN CONNEXION WITH THE BRITISH AND IRISH CONFERENCES AND SEVERAL AFFILIATED CONFERENCES. 1861.

	Members.	On Trial.	Ministers.	On Trial.	Supernumeraries.	Native Assistant Missionaries.
I. British Conference:						
Great Britain	319,782	23,271	918	228	177	—
Ireland.....	23,551	941	90	23	26	—
.....Missionaries	2,357	141	24	—	—	—
Foreign Missions	63,540	6,331	384	57	18	25
II. French Conference						
	1,509	124	21	6	3	—
III. Australasian Conference ...						
	33,964	7,657	110	40	9	28
IV. Canada Conference						
	48,281	5,283	305	107	64	—
V. Eastern British American Conference						
	15,497	1,553	132	—	8	—
Totals.....	508,481	45,301	1,984	461	305	53

B, page 13.—*Letter to Irish Preachers on the refusal to allow the Administration of the Sacraments.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN,

YOU are the fruit of our labours; the children of our prayers and tears: whatever in your circumstances afflicts, or in your religious progress may embarrass you, must awake in us the liveliest feeling of just concern. Your case concerning the supper of the Lord fully came before us, your letters were all read, and deliberately considered. We are deeply pained on finding the real distresses many of you labour under. As guardians of Methodism in Ireland, everything that can be done, consistent with the best interests of the Body, we feel ourselves most cordially disposed to do. But on a review of all circumstances, we assure you in the most affectionate manner, that it is our judgment, to meet your case as might be expected would most certainly prove injurious to our Connexion at large; therefore the only thing that can be done by us at present to afford relief is, to request our beloved brother Averell, to visit you as often as possible, to administer to you the precious memorials of redeeming love. We hope, dear brethren, that you will continue to evidence the peacefulness and long-suffering of the Gospel, and study to preserve "the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." May the Eternal Spirit shed His holy influence abundantly on you all. Signed in behalf and by order of the Conference,

WALTER GRIFFITH, President.

ROBERT CROZIER, Secretary.

C, page 22.—*Irish Plan of Pacification.*

EXTRACTS from the Minutes of this year:—

Ques. 16. As our Connexion has been greatly agitated for several years past respecting the administration of the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper by our preachers; and as the matter is become so serious as to threaten a division in the Body:—*What shall be done, to restore, and preserve peace in our Societies?*

A. 1. The Lord's supper shall not be administered on any account, in any place, without the consent of the Conference having been first obtained.

2. It shall not be granted to any Circuit, but with the consent (signified in writing, to the Conference) of *two-thirds* of the stewards and leaders of such Circuits, being duly assembled at a Quarterly-meeting.

3. It shall not be administered in any chapel, but with the consent (signified in writing, to the Conference) of *two-thirds* of the stewards, leaders, and trustees of such chapel, duly summoned for that purpose, and the votes collectively taken.

4. It shall be administered at all times according to the ritual of the Church of England; the officiating preacher being at liberty to sing hymns, give short exhortations, and use extemporary prayer.

5. The superintendent shall be the administrator; but he may call to his assistance, or appoint his helper or helpers, being in full connexion.

6. No preacher *on trial* shall administer baptism, or the Lord's supper, except in case of approaching dissolution.

7. Those preachers who have already administered the Lord's supper, or may hereafter be appointed to administer, shall not be stationed on those Circuits where its administration is not allowed, unless petitioned for by a majority of the stewards and leaders at a Quarterly-meeting of such Circuits.

8. If any preacher be found to disturb the Societies by agitating the question *for or against*, upon complaint being made and proved, such preacher shall be put back on trial; and, if on trial, shall be suspended for a year.

9. If any preacher shall publish any pamphlet, or circular letter, *for or against* this subject, he shall be put back on trial; or, if on trial, shall be suspended for a year. However, this is not intended to prevent a preacher from vindicating his character if personally attacked; but he must confine himself to personal vindication.

10. A committee of seven shall be annually appointed by the ballot of the Conference, which shall be empowered to see that these rules be not broken, and to punish the violators of them by reproof, or suspension, as the case requires. But this committee shall not interfere with the other matters which are generally cognizable by a District-meeting.

11. All letters addressed to the chairman of said committee shall be post-paid, and all expenses consequent upon such meeting shall be defrayed by the Circuit on whose account it may be called.

12. The Conference allows the administration of the sacraments, in the mode prescribed, in the following Circuits, viz., SLIGO, NEWRY, ARMAGH, TANDERAGEE, BELFAST, CARRICKFERGUS, STRABANE, and COLERAINE.

D, page 24.—*Judgment of the Master of the Rolls, Ireland, in the Case of the Derry Chapel.*

DINNEN AND SMITH v. MOORE, EDGAR, AND M'KEEVER.

THIS important case, involving the interests of the Methodist Body in Ireland, received its final decision from the master of the rolls on Friday, the 19th ult.

The case was this:—The Conference for the year 1816 found it expedient to permit some of the preachers to administer the sacraments in certain specified Circuits, not including that of Londonderry, and with certain restrictions; upon which the respondents, who were trustees of the Derry chapel, shut the doors against the preacher appointed by the Conference, and refused to admit him to the use of the chapel, except upon the terms of his relinquishing all connexion with the Conference, and those who were disposed to submit to it. The petitioners, one of whom was the excluded preacher, the other one of his congregation, on the 15th of February, 1817, presented their petition to the chancellor, under the fifty-second of the King, ch. 101, praying to be restored to the use of the chapel; and that the trustees, having violated their trust, might be removed. The respondents answered the petition on the 23rd day of April, 1817; and insisted, in substance, that the Conference, by permitting the administration of the sacraments by the Methodist preacher, and by allowing service at the Methodist chapels in Church hours, had introduced a radical change in Methodism, and violated their duty; and that therefore their character, as the Conference of the Methodists, and their rights to appoint preachers to the use and enjoyment of the chapels, had ceased. On the 12th day of May following, an order was made by his honour, referring it to the master to inquire and report whether the petitioner Dinnen was a preacher duly appointed under the meaning of the deeds in the pleadings mentioned, being Mr. Wesley's Deed of Declaration, executed in 1784, establishing the constitution of

the Conference, and the deed under which the trustees held the chapel in question, executed in 1788. And also to inquire and report whether Mr. West (a gentleman to whom the trustees had given the use of the chapel after the exclusion of the petitioner Dinnen) had officiated therein, and for what time, and by what authority. The master having, after the fullest examination of the evidence offered on each side, on the 18th day of May, 1818, reported that the petitioner Dinnen was the preacher duly appointed according to the trust of the deed mentioned in the order; and that Mr. West had been permitted by the respondents to have the use of the chapel, to the exclusion of the petitioner Dinnen. An application was made by the respondents to his honour the master of the rolls, to set aside the report, and also an application by the petitioners, that the report might stand confirmed; and for an order according to the prayer of their petition. These applications came on to be heard on the 1st day of June, when the attorney-general stated the case on the part of the respondents, and on the next day the solicitor-general stated the petitioners' case. His honour then heard the evidence on either side; and after hearing Mr. Edward Pennefather, counsel for the respondents, and Mr. Smyly on behalf of the petitioners, he further heard Mr. Stokes and Mr. Deering on behalf of the respondents; and a question having been raised whether the Methodists were entitled to the benefit of the Toleration Acts or not, his honour expressed his concurrence with the master on the general question; and called on Mr. Schoales and Mr. Cruise, counsel on behalf of the petitioners, desiring them to confine themselves to the question made on the Toleration Acts; and after hearing them on this point, his honour on the 19th day of June pronounced his judgment nearly as follows:—

“I have considered this case, and looked into the cases that were cited by Mr. Deering. I conceive the general question to be, who are the *cestui que* trustees in the deed of 1788, and the evidence ought to be very convincing to induce me to dissent from the conclusion which the master had drawn; but on the best consideration I have been able to give to the evidence, I concur with the master in his deductions. A temporal court must always encounter great difficulties in such a case as this; but it appears to me that this must be considered a trust, and it is in that light only that a temporal court can consider it.

“And considering it in that light, the question is, whether this preacher appointed by the Conference (which is an emanation from the English Conference, a delegate from which is of vital necessity to its existence) is to be restrained from exercising his functions by the proviso in this deed, that he preach no other doctrine than what is contained in Mr. Wesley's ‘Notes on the New Testament,’ and his four volumes of Sermons. Those works are the standard by which we are to measure the rights of the preacher; and the question is, how far he has regulated, or intends to regulate, himself by these. The points in difference between the parties are three.

“By the Conference of 1816 and 1817, a power is claimed, which is not exercised in the particular chapel in question, but is exercised in others; namely, the power of administering the sacraments of baptism and the Lord's supper, and of having divine service in Church hours. Whether they are consistent with the opinions of Mr. Wesley, as found in his standard writings, is the question. And in this view, if we can find in these writings satisfactory, decisive, and unequivocal opinions on any of these points, we should not be at liberty to go further. Each party has quoted many passages from those writings, in support of each side of these questions; and they have also resorted to the other writings of Mr. Wesley, and to the still more persuasive evidence of his acts. As to Mr. Wesley's having exercised the power of holding divine service in Church hours, I think what has been read from the fifteenth volume of his Works is quite decisive.

“This reduces the matter to the two remaining questions; and as to them, they have proved, in several instances, that Mr. Wesley authorized laymen (not episcopally ordained) to administer the sacraments; nine for America, three for Scotland, and three for England generally. The exercise of this power by Mr. Wesley, therefore, seems to me to be clear; and the same power, though perhaps modified in some respects, is now assumed by the Conference, and I cannot therefore draw an inference from the facts different from the master's.

"The next question is, whether this must be in itself an illegal trust; and certainly, if it were against the provisions of any statute, the persons claiming under it could have no redress here. Looking into the Act of Uniformity, particularly sect. 13, preaching is as illegal as administering the sacraments; it is liable to be followed by an imprisonment for three months; and the other is prohibited under the penalty of £100. That Methodists have been considered as coming within the Act of Toleration, I think is plain; no case has been found to the contrary, and that case that was referred to from 3 Burrow, is strong to the point; but the statute 6th Geo. I., c. 5, sect. 3, 10, 15, is quite express, and leaves no doubt on the subject. The parties have always acted accordingly; they have registered at the Sessions, and taken out licences, as these laws require; therefore there is nothing illegal in this trust.

"The remaining consideration is with respect to the costs. I think the application to set aside the report must be refused with costs; for where a party appeals from the decision of the master on a matter of fact submitted to him, and the court think the appeal unfounded, that party must pay the costs. But upon the rest of the case, I conceive these trustees cannot be deemed to have committed a breach of duty,—putting the question into a course of inquiry. They had a right to call upon the petitioner to show that he was their *cestui que* trust. I conceive inquiry was proper, and therefore each party ought to pay his own costs of that part of the proceeding. It remains only to consider whether the trustees ought to be removed. Technically speaking, they have been guilty of a breach of trust; for the master finds that a gentleman, (who I dare say may be a very unexceptional man,) Mr. West, was appointed by the trustees, and still continues to keep possession of the chapel; and though it was reasonable that the chapel should be kept open, and the motive of the trustees was fair and honest, yet they exercised the power which they had no right to exercise, and which amounted to a breach of trust. I have had great doubts who should pay the costs of appointing new trustees, but on the best consideration I could give it, I think the petitioner ought to pay these costs."

His Honour made an order for removing the trustees accordingly. Alexander Crookshank and Francis Cruise, solicitors for petitioners. Peter Macdonagh and Thomas Black, solicitors for respondents.

E, page 27.—*Laws and Regulations of the Wesleyan Missionary Society.*

"I. THIS institution shall be designated 'The Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society.'

"II. The object of this Society is to excite and combine, on a plan more systematic and efficient than has heretofore been accomplished, the exertions of the Societies and congregations of the Wesleyan Methodists (and of others, who are friends to the conversion of the heathen world, and to the preaching of the Gospel generally in foreign lands) in the support and enlargement of the foreign Missions, which were first established by the Rev. John Wesley, A.M., the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL.D., and others; and which are now, or shall be, from year to year, carried on under the sanction and direction of the Conference of the people called Methodists.

"III. Every person subscribing annually the sum of one guinea and upwards, and every benefactor presenting a donation of ten pounds and upwards shall be deemed a member of this Society, and entitled, as such, to a copy of the general Annual Report.

"IV. All Methodist Missionary Societies which have already been formed, and those which it is intended to form, as soon as it shall be found practicable, for the several Districts in this kingdom into which the Methodist Connexion is divided, shall be entitled, 'Auxiliary Methodist Missionary Societies,' for the Districts in which they have been, or may be, formed.

"All Methodist Missionary Societies already formed, or hereafter to be formed, in the particular Circuits of any District, shall be entitled, 'Branch Methodist Missionary Societies' for the *Circuit*, or (where there are, or shall be, more than one such Society in the same Circuit) for the city, town, or village, in which they are, or shall be, established.

And the formation of *Ladies' Branch Associations*, and of *Juvenile Branch Societies*, in connexion with the auxiliary societies of the several Districts, is also earnestly recommended wherever separate institutions of that nature are likely to be advantageous.

"V. The monies raised in any Circuit for the Methodist Missions, by branch societies, or other local associations, and all other monies, in whatsoever way collected, for the same object, shall be regularly paid, once in every quarter, or oftener, into the hands of the treasurer of the auxiliary society for the District in which the said Circuit is situated, with the deduction only of such sums as may have been disbursed for the incidental and local expenses of the branch society. And the treasurer of every district auxiliary society shall remit to the treasurer or treasurers of the general Society in London, once in every quarter, or oftener, all sums so received by him from the various Circuits in his District, deducting only the necessary incidental expenses incurred by the auxiliary Society.

"VI. The secretaries of every branch society, or other local association, shall forward annually to the secretaries of the auxiliary society for their District, an alphabetical list of all the benefactors and subscribers during the preceding twelve months, with an account of their respective contributions; stating, at the same time, what portion of the sums so received had been detained for local expenses, and what portion had been paid in to the treasurer of the District. And the secretaries of every district auxiliary society shall also forward annually to the secretaries of the general Society in London a similar list of the benefactors and subscribers in all the Circuits of their District, and an abstract of the accounts of the auxiliary society, showing its gross receipts, its local payments, and its remittances to the general treasurers.

"VII. All benefactors of ten pounds and upwards, and all subscribers of one guinea and upwards, annually, to any of the auxiliary and branch societies, or other local associations, in connexion with this institution, shall be deemed, in right of such benefaction or subscription, members of the general Society.

"VIII. All persons who collect to the amount of one shilling and upwards weekly, or five shillings and upwards monthly, for this institution, or for any of its auxiliaries, branches, or associations, shall also be members of the general Society, and entitled to receive a copy of each Annual Report, and of each number of the Methodist Missionary Notices.

"IX. An annual public meeting of the members and friends of this Society, connected with such religious services as may be deemed expedient, shall be held in London, on the first Monday in May, unless that day shall fall on the 6th or 7th of May, in which case the meeting shall be held for that year on the 29th or 30th of April.

"X. A general committee shall be appointed by the Conference, to whom shall be intrusted (in the intervals of the annual assemblies of that body) the superintendence of the collection and disbursement of all monies raised for the foreign Missions which are now, or may hereafter be, carried on under its sanction, and by the preachers in connexion with it; and also the general management of those Missions, according to the rules hereinafter provided. This committee shall consist of the president and secretary of the Conference for the time being, and of forty-eight other members; of whom at least one-third (eight travelling preachers, and eight other members of the Methodist Society) shall be selected from the country Circuits; the rest shall be resident in or near London, where meetings of the committee shall be held once a month, or oftener, for the transaction of business. Those of the Methodist ministers who are annual subscribers to the Missions of one guinea, and one treasurer, secretary, or other principal member from every district auxiliary society, who may be in London occasionally, shall be entitled to meet and vote with the committee.

"XI. The London members of the general committee shall consist of sixteen of the Methodist ministers, stationed for the time being in or near London, and of sixteen gentlemen, members of the Methodist Society, not travelling preachers. Four out of the last-mentioned sixteen shall go out annually by rotation. This rotation, during the first three years, shall be effected by ballot of the committee, after which it will proceed in regular course. Four of the country members (two preachers and two others) shall also be changed annually.

"XII. One or more general treasurers, who shall be entitled to sit and vote with the committee, during the year of their continuance in office, shall be annually appointed.

"XIII. Three* of the Methodist ministers, stationed in or near London, shall be appointed to conduct the official correspondence of the missions, and to perform the other duties of secretaries. The secretaries shall be expected to devote themselves on the week days, in general, to the service of the Missions exclusively; being, subject, however, to all the general rules of the Connexion, respecting a regular change of station.

"XIV. As all the missionaries supported by the funds of this Society are to be preachers in connexion with, and under the direction of, the Methodist Conference, and have generally a claim to be received as such into the Connexion at home, on their return from foreign stations, the selection of missionaries shall be made in the following way:—

"1. Every candidate must, in the first instance, be recommended by the superintendent of the Circuit in which he resides; be approved by the Quarterly-meeting of that Circuit; and be examined and approved also, either by the annual District-meeting, or, at least, by three other superintendents in the neighbourhood.

"2. The list of candidates for missionary service, who shall be thus recommended by their several superintendents, Quarterly-meetings, and District-meetings, &c., shall be annually laid before the Conference; and such a number of those who are deemed most eligible, as are likely to be wanted in the course of the ensuing twelve months, shall be sent for to the Conference, and be examined by a special committee, in reference to their missionary views and qualifications. In cases where it may be found inexpedient for them to attend the Conference, they shall be examined by as many of the preachers of the London District as can conveniently assemble for that purpose.

"3. Those candidates who shall be approved by the special committee at the Conference, or by the preachers of the London District, as before mentioned, shall be entered on the list of received missionaries, and be subject to the call of the general committee for such stations as may need supply or reinforcement.

"4. When preachers, already engaged as such in the Connexion at home, offer themselves for foreign service, they shall be personally examined in reference to that subject by a special committee at the Conference; or, if that be impracticable, by as many of the preachers of the London District as can conveniently assemble for the purpose; and shall, if approved, be also placed on the list of received missionaries.

"5. If it shall at any time appear to a majority of the general committee in London, that there are reasons why any preacher called out from the said list of received missionaries, and proposed for a foreign station, should not proceed upon that service, they shall have a right to suspend his appointment as a missionary, until the ensuing Conference shall especially consider and determine on his case.

"6. If, in the intervals of the annual meetings of the Conference, the list of received missionaries shall be exhausted, and more missionaries shall be urgently wanted, or if an immediate supply shall be needed for some station of peculiar difficulty, or requiring peculiar qualifications, the general committee shall be at liberty to employ such persons as they deem suitable. Provided, always, that such persons shall have been previously recommended by their respective superintendents, by the Quarterly-meetings of the Circuits in which they reside, and either by the District-meetings, or by three other neighbouring superintendents, and also previously examined and approved by as many of the preachers of the London District as can conveniently assemble, who shall be considered, on such occasions, as exercising, on behalf of the Conference, the same functions which would, in ordinary cases, belong to the special committee appointed during the sittings of the Conference, according to the 2nd and 4th articles of this rule. Provided, also, that this right of the committee to employ missionaries not entered on the annual list, shall be exercised only in case of pressing necessity, and not without the consent of the president of the Conference for the time being.

"XV. The plan for stationing the missionaries supported by this Society, shall be annually drawn up by the secretaries, laid before the general committee in London, and, if approved by them, recommended to the Conference.

"XVI. The trial of missionaries, who may, at any time, be accused of misconduct, or of

* This regulation has since been altered to four, instead of three.

having deviated from the doctrines and discipline of the Connexion, shall, in all ordinary cases, be left with the foreign District-meetings, to which such missionaries may at the time belong, according to the general rules and usages of the Methodist Conference. But the Conference shall have, as heretofore, the right of recalling any missionary, whether put on his trial by a foreign District-meeting or not, whenever there shall appear to them to be reason for such recall. And, in the intervals of the sittings of the Conference, the general committee in London shall possess a similar power of recall, and of putting any missionary, so recalled by them, upon his trial before the ensuing Conference; or, in case of necessity for immediate decision, before the preachers of the London District.*

“XVII. For the satisfaction of the numerous country friends of this Society, on whose continued co-operation so much depends, and many of whom are in the habit of attending the annual meetings of the Conference, it is agreed, that a special meeting of the general committee shall be held once a year, at the place where the Conference is held, at nine o'clock in the morning of the Tuesday preceding the last Wednesday in July. To this meeting the Conference shall, from year to year, invite nine preachers, and nine other members of the Methodist Society, resident in the neighbourhood, who are not travelling preachers, together with the treasurers and secretaries of the different auxiliary and branch Societies in the vicinity, and such other leading country friends of the Methodist Missions as can conveniently attend. The persons thus assembled, in conjunction with those regular members of the general committee who can be present, shall review the Minutes of the financial business transacted during the preceding year, and examine the general accounts of the state and expenditure of every Mission. Any suggestions for the improvement or extension of the missionary concerns of the Connexion, which this special meeting may deem it expedient to recommend, shall be minuted by the secretaries, and promptly considered by the Conference, or at the subsequent regular meetings of the general committee in London.

“XVIII. It is earnestly recommended to the members of this Society, and of the auxiliary societies, and other local associations in connexion with it, to consider it as an indispensable part of their daily Christian duty, to pray to Almighty God for a blessing upon its designs, and upon those of all similar societies of other denominations, engaged in the propagation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ; under the full conviction that, unless He ‘prevent us in all our doings with His most gracious favour, and further us with His continual help,’ we cannot reasonably hope for a succession of persons of proper spirit and qualifications for the office of missionaries; or expect their labours to be crowned with the desired success. And it is further hoped that, with the same view, all the members and friends of this Society will sanction, in their several neighbourhoods, by their presence and influence, the monthly missionary prayer-meetings, which should be held in every chapel in the Methodist Connexion, according to the recommendation of the Conference, published in their Minutes for 1815; at which meetings, extracts from the Missionary Notices, containing recent intelligence from the foreign stations, may be read, and united supplications offered up for the salvation of the world.”

F, page 137.—*Proposed Plan for Improvement of Preachers on the List of Reserve.*

Q. XXVII. WHAT further measures can we adopt for the improvement of our young preachers?

A. 1. We unanimously agree, that the time is now fully come, when some more systematic and effectual plan ought to be attempted, for affording to those preachers who have been placed, after the usual examinations and recommendations, on the List of Reserve, but are not immediately needed for the regular supply of our Circuits, such means of instruction in the doctrines and discipline of Methodism, and of general improvement, as may prepare them for future usefulness, by placing them, for a limited period, in different Circuits, under the care of various senior preachers, who will undertake the direction of their studies and labours, and the superintendence of their general conduct.

* Or as many of the London preachers as can conveniently assemble.

2. We approve of the general principle of the plan now recommended by the committee who have, during this Conference, considered the subject, and reported their opinion respecting it.

3. We appoint the Rev. Messrs. Entwisle, Gaulter, Bunting, Edmondson, Watson, Reece, Thomas Jackson, Isaac, Valentine Ward, Lessey, Hannah, Stephens, Marsden, Burdsall, Morley, Galland, Warren, and Waddy, as a general committee, to prepare this important measure for the mature and final consideration of the next Conference.

4. We appoint the Rev. Messrs. Entwisle, Watson, Edmondson, Bunting, Jackson, Galland, and Hannah, as a sub-committee, to revise and complete the plan now presented; and authorize them to correspond with the other members of the committee on the subject, and, with their consent and sanction, to circulate the plan, when finished, among the preachers, and among our principal friends in every Circuit.

5. The preachers are directed privately to consult our leading friends in their respective Circuits on this subject; and to ascertain as nearly as may be, to what amount it is likely that our more affluent members, and other friends, will be willing to contribute, in the way of annual subscriptions, for this distinct and specific object,—an object with which their own spiritual edification, and that of their families, as well as the general character, influence, and usefulness of Methodism, both at home and abroad, appear to be, in the present times and circumstances, most intimately connected.

G, page 217.—*Case of the Rev. J. R. Stephens.*

THE following documents contain the CASE of Mr. J. R. STEPHENS, as brought before the Conference by the Manchester District-meeting, with the PROCEEDINGS of that meeting in reference to it; and also the JUDGMENT OF THE CONFERENCE on the Appeal of Mr. Stephens from the decision of the said District-meeting.

I. THE REPORT OF THE DISTRICT-MEETING.

CASE.

1. THAT Brother J. R. Stephens has attended four public meetings, held at Ashton-under-Line, Hyde, Oldham, and Staleybridge, one of the avowed objects of which meetings was, to obtain the total separation of the Church and the State; and that at these meetings he delivered speeches, expressive of his approbation of that object.

2. That at the Ashton Meeting the terms "Wesleyan Methodists of Ashton-under-Line" were, on his motion, introduced into the preamble of a memorial, complaining of certain practical grievances of Dissenters.

3. That he announced from the pulpit that a Town's Petition, praying for a separation of the Church and the State, lay for signatures in the vestry of the chapel.

4. That he has accepted an appointment to the office of corresponding secretary to a Society called the "Church-Separation Society for Ashton-under-Line and the neighbouring District."

The above-mentioned facts were admitted by Brother Stephens.

5. That he has thus acted without consulting his superintendent, and contrary to his example and expressed opinion.

The whole case having been solemnly and impartially considered, the following Resolutions were unanimously adopted by the meeting:—

1. That in these proceedings Brother Stephens has flagrantly violated the peaceable and anti-sectarian spirit of Wesleyan Methodism so strongly enjoined in the writings of our Founder, enforced by repeated acts of the Conference since his decease, and required as a necessary qualification of every Methodist preacher, particularly in that epitome of his pastoral duties contained in the Minutes of 1820, and directed, by a standing order of the Conference, to be read in every Annual District-meeting, as solemnly binding on every minister in our Connexion.

2. That the above-mentioned speeches of Brother Stephens are directly at variance with the general sentiments of Mr. Wesley and the Conference, and are distinguished by a spirit highly unbecoming a Wesleyan minister, and inconsistent with those sentiments of respect

and affection towards the Church of England which our Connexion has, from the beginning, openly professed and honourably maintained.

3. That, as far as his influence extends, Brother Stephens has committed the character of the Connexion on a question involving its public credit as well as its internal tranquillity; and that he has manifested a great want of deference to the recorded opinions of his fathers and brethren in the ministry, and a recklessness of consequences as to himself and others, by the very active and prominent part which he has taken in the aggressive proceedings adopted by the meetings before referred to.

4. That he has endangered the peace, and acted prejudicially to the spirituality, of the Connexion, by giving occasion to the introduction, amongst our people, of unprofitable disputations on ecclesiastical politics, thus violating the directions of the last Conference in its "Pastoral Address" to the Societies, which Brother Stephens, as well as every other Methodist preacher, was bound, by his example at least, to enforce.—See Minutes for 1833, p. 305.

5. That Brother Stephens, in accepting the office of corresponding secretary to the Ashton Church-Separation Society, has acted contrary to his peculiar calling and solemn engagements as a Methodist preacher.

6. That the culpability of these proceedings is aggravated by the fact, that they were pursued by Brother Stephens without consultation with his superintendent, and contrary to his example and expressed opinion.

7. That Brother Stephens be authoritatively required to resign his office as secretary to the Church-Separation Society, and to abstain, until the next Conference, from taking any part in the proceedings of that Society, or of any other society or meeting having a kindred object: and that, in the event of a violation of this injunction, he be forthwith suspended until the Conference; and that his superintendent give immediate notice to the Chairman of the District, that the president may supply his place in the Ashton Circuit.

The above Resolutions having been read to Brother Stephens, he declared that on the finding of the second and third, he *could not acknowledge the authority of the meeting, and that he would not resign his office* of corresponding secretary to the Church-Separation Society of Ashton-under-Line.

He is, therefore, now suspended from the exercise of his ministry until the next Conference.

8. That Brother Stephens be required forthwith to remove from the Ashton-under-Line Circuit, and that the Chairman be requested to write to the president for a supply.

II. THE JUDGMENT OF THE CONFERENCE.

Mr. Stephens having been heard at length in support of his Appeal against the decision of his District-meeting, the Conference, after due deliberation, resolved as follows:—

1. That the *facts* of the case, as stated by the District-meeting, were proved at the time by Mr. Stephens's own admission, or by sufficient evidence; which evidence has since received, in the presence of the Conference, and of Mr. Stephens himself, additional confirmation.

2. That the *general views* of the case, as recorded in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 6th Resolutions of the District-meeting are approved by the Conference.

3. That the *first Decision* of the District-meeting (Article 7, which, without requiring from Mr. Stephens any unreasonable sacrifice of the right of private judgment, or any public renunciation of his peculiar opinions, only demanded his resignation of the office of secretary to the Church-Separation Society, and his entire abstinence, until the direction of the Conference could be obtained, from all overt acts of hostility against the religious establishment of our country) has the approbation of the Conference, and ought, in its judgment, to have been submitted to by Mr. Stephens.

4. That the *ulterior proceeding* of the District-meeting (art. 7, last clause, and art. 8) in suspending Mr. Stephens, until the meeting of this Conference, was, in the judgment of this Conference, a proper measure of discipline, required, under such circumstances, by a regard to the established principles, professions, and usages of our Connexion, and rendered unavoidable by Mr. Stephens's declining, on very insufficient grounds, to meet the just

requirement of the District, by abstaining in his public conduct from further proceeding in the course which he had previously adopted.

On the whole—*As to the PAST* :—

1. The Conference confirms the Minutes of the Manchester District-meeting.

As to the FUTURE :—

2. The Conference *now* requires from Mr. Stephens a *distinct pledge*, not in reference to any peculiarities of private opinion, but of his readiness to meet, as a Wesleyan Methodist minister, the wishes of his brethren, and to consult the peace and good order of the Connexion, by strictly refraining from all future proceedings similar in character and spirit to those which have been so justly offensive in the past year, and to devote himself wholly to his proper work and calling : and, *on giving this pledge*, Mr. Stephens shall be restored to his place in our Body.

3. The Conference resolves, that if Mr. Stephens now refuse this pledge, his suspension shall be continued till the meeting of the Conference in 1835, in the hope that reflection and advice will induce him then to make such *concessions* as will prevent the otherwise unavoidable termination of his ministerial connexion with us.

4. In that case, whenever Mr. Stephens shall forward to our president, *in writing*, the *distinct pledge* as to his future conduct, required by the preceding Resolution, the president shall be at liberty to place him in a Circuit, on the occurrence of the first suitable vacancy.

H, page 245.—*Recommendations of the Committee for the formation of an Institution, as revised and adopted by the Conference.*

(I.) THAT it is expedient that an Institution should be speedily formed for promoting the more effectual improvement of the junior preachers in the Methodist Connexion.

(II.) That this Institution shall be denominated “The Wesleyan Theological Institution for the Improvement of the Junior Preachers.”

(III.) That all preachers who shall have passed through the various examinations required by our existing rules, and obtained the consent of their respective Quarterly-meetings and the recommendation of the superintendents and District-meetings, and shall have been placed by the Conference on the president’s list of reserve, *and none else*, shall be eligible for admission into this Institution as resident students, and shall be allowed to remain in it for two or three years, as may be found most consistent with the claims of the Connexion for the immediate supply of the Circuits and Missions, and with the capacity and attainments of the students themselves.

N. B. 1. In those cases in which a third year’s residence is allowed, that third year shall be reckoned to the student as the first of the four years of probation now required by our rule.

2. As it has been intimated to the committee that the trustees of an Irish gentleman, who lately bequeathed a legacy of one thousand pounds, to promote the improvement of our junior preachers in Ireland, are willing to pay over that legacy in aid of this Institution, it is recommended that, in consideration of this payment, of other contributions expected from Ireland, and of the special claims of that country, the Irish Connexion shall always be allowed to have four resident students in the Institution, and an additional number, if deemed expedient, on the payment of a reasonable sum.

(IV.) That, as soon as practicable after the Conference of each year, all the young preachers placed on the president’s list of reserve shall be subjected to an *additional* examination by a committee consisting of the preachers of the London District, or as many of them as can conveniently assemble ; that this committee shall decide which of the candidates it may be proper to admit into the Institution-house, and which of them shall still be kept on the list of reserve for the immediate service of the home and foreign work ; and that, should the committee in their examination judge any of these candidates to be deficient in the requisite qualifications for the Christian ministry to such a degree as to excite a doubt whether they will ever become acceptable ministers of the Gospel among us,

they shall have power to pronounce them ineligible to be called out into the work for that year, and shall refer their cases for re-consideration to the ensuing Conference.

(V.) That the plan of tuition for resident students shall comprehend as many of the following subjects as, on a careful consideration of the previous attainments and probable opportunities of the several students, may be deemed suitable and practicable; viz.,—

1. English grammar, composition, and elocution, geography and history; and elementary instruction in the mathematics, natural philosophy, and chemistry, and in logic and the philosophy of the mind.

2. Theology; including the evidences, doctrines, duties, and institutions of Christianity, and having particular reference to those views of the Christian system, in its application to experimental and practical religion, which are held by our Body to be conformable to the Holy Scriptures. This will also include the general principles of church order and government, connected with a distinct exposition of our own established discipline, and of the proper methods of administering it for the purity, edification, and preservation of our Societies; and a view of the nature and importance of the pastoral office and care, with special reference to the duties and engagements of a Methodist preacher.

3. The elements of biblical criticism; the best methods of critically studying the Scriptures; the rules and principles to be observed in their interpretation; Hebrew, Greek, and Roman antiquities; and the outlines of ecclesiastical history.

4. The most useful methods of direct preparation for the pulpit; and general instructions for the composition and acceptable delivery of sermons.

5. Such instruction in the Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages, as may enable the students to read and study the sacred Scriptures in their original tongues, and prepare them for the successful pursuit of farther classical and biblical knowledge, when they shall be called into Circuits or Missions. This branch of instruction may, however, be wholly omitted, at the discretion of the officers of the Institution, if, on examining the student, at his first admission, or subsequently, they shall deem it most expedient to confine his attention to the English and theological classes.

(VI.) That the care and assistance of this Institution shall be extended also to those candidates for the Christian ministry who cannot be received into the Institution-house; for which purpose they shall be regarded as non-resident students. The object of this care and assistance shall be to direct them in the prosecution of their literary and theological studies; to aid them in the purchase of suitable books, according to a list to be prepared for that purpose; and to make provision for their regular annual examination by one of the officers of the Institution, assisted by such person or persons as the Conference may appoint, in reference to the studies which shall have been enjoined. These examinations of non-resident students shall take place, either at the house of the Institution, or elsewhere, as may be most convenient; and an exact and faithful Report of them shall be presented every year to the Conference.

(VII.) That suitable premises for the tutors and resident students of the Institution shall, in the first instance, be rented, rather than bought or erected, in order that due time may be afforded for the trial of the proposed plans, and for ascertaining by experience what accommodations will be ultimately needed.

(VIII.) That, after much and careful deliberation, it is the unanimous judgment of the committee that such premises should, for the present, be situated in or near London, for the following among other reasons:—Because, first, the neighbourhood of the metropolis affords the means of obtaining for the students, at a small expense and with little trouble, those helps to improvement which may be derived from lectures by eminent professors in several important branches of useful knowledge; helps which, under the direction of a vigilant tutor, and with a proper degree of previous preparation, will be found of incalculable advantage:—Because, secondly, among the students there will always be a considerable number of such as are intended for the foreign service; and it is especially desirable that these should be within the reach of those instructions which are adapted to their peculiar work and prospects, and which they can receive only from the missionary secretaries:—And because, thirdly, it is eminently desirable that the students, while in a course of preparation

for Circuits or Missions, should be employed, every Sabbath-day, in preaching the Gospel and in other auxiliary departments of usefulness ; and it is obvious that there are large and long-neglected districts, in the metropolis itself, and in several adjoining counties, which appear to present the best and widest field for such labours,—a field, too, which, beyond all others in this country, is least supplied, in the ordinary mode, with the services of our preachers, whether itinerant or local.

(IX.) That while the committee continue to be of opinion, after the most careful and mature consideration of every other plan which has been at various times proposed, that the *best* if not the *only* method of fully securing the objects contemplated, will be to provide a suitable house for the common residence of the preachers on the list of reserve, they are also of opinion that this plan should be tried *at first* on a smaller scale than was originally suggested in the printed report of their meetings in October last : And they now recommend that provision should not at present be made in the Institution-house for more than about *thirty* students ; and that it should embrace, as nearly as may be found convenient, *sixteen* of the preachers intended for our work in Great Britain, *four* of those intended for the service in Ireland, and *ten* of those who are entered on the missionary list, as having already devoted themselves, specifically, to the service of Christ in foreign lands.—But the number of each class may at any time be extended, if it be deemed expedient, when adequate means of support shall be furnished.

I, p. 262.—*Resolutions forming the Basis of "The Grand Central Association."*

AT a meeting held this day in Manchester, of trustees, leaders, local preachers, and stewards of the four Circuits, William Smith, Esq., of Reddish House, in the chair, it was Resolved,—

That we, whose names are hereunto subscribed, being officers and members of the Wesleyan Methodist Society in the four Manchester Circuits, viewing with dismay the continued determination of the Conference, ever since the lamentable occurrence at Leeds in 1827, to disregard all law, to exercise an absolute sway over the people, and to treat with contempt their most respectful addresses, in consequence of which many of the most valuable members of the Body have, in despair of a righteous course being returned to, united themselves with other religious denominations, to the manifest injury of Methodism ; and fearing that if that Body and its representatives longer pursue such a career, no honest and upright man can remain connected with them ; having concluded that the time is fully come when a determined opposition should be organized,—do, in the fear of God, form ourselves into a **GRAND CENTRAL ASSOCIATION** for the following purposes :—

1st. To obtain from the Conference a disavowal of the powers exercised by the Special District-meeting at Leeds in 1827, and a revision of the Rules of 1797, so as to divest them, as much as possible, of all ambiguity as to the rights of both preachers and people ; which we think is imperatively called for by the transactions of the meeting alluded to ; and by the *absolute* decision of the Conference of 1834, to establish a Theological Institution, without consulting the constituted authorities of Methodism.

2nd. To obtain from the Conference their consent to open all its sittings to the public, under the following restrictions : *first*,—that the people shall sit apart from the preachers, and not be entitled to vote ; and *secondly*,—that each travelling preacher in full connexion be allowed to admit, by ticket, one person to each sitting of the Conference ; excepting only when the characters of the preachers are under examination, and when the members of the Legalized Fund are transacting their own peculiar business.

We agree that, until the Conference grant these our reasonable requests, we will withhold our contributions from the Missionary, Contingent, Chapel, and all Funds whatsoever which are under its control, and confine ourselves to the maintenance of the preachers in our own Circuits.

We Resolve :—1st. That a fund be created to defray the necessary expenses of postage, preaching, deputations, &c., in communicating with the branch associations, to be formed upon similar principles in different parts of the kingdom, and to support such preachers as *may*, in consequence of advocating our views, be deprived of their usual means of subsistence

All contributions towards this object are requested to be forwarded to the treasurer, William Smith, Esq., Reddish House, near Stockport.

2nd. That a committee, consisting of a chairman, treasurer, secretaries, and twenty-four members, be appointed.

3rd. That the meetings of this Association be held as often as the committee think necessary, or upon a requisition to the chairman signed by any ten members.

Dear Brethren :—The Manchester First Circuit has already appeared before you in a series of Resolutions, and an Address condemnatory of the late proceedings of Conference.

Yesterday evening a meeting, consisting of official men from the four Manchester Circuits, and of deputies from the two Liverpool Circuits, was held, when it was unanimously Resolved,—That associations should be formed throughout the Societies in the kingdom to communicate information on Methodistical affairs, and take charge of such funds as may be contributed for the purpose of procuring a return of the Conference to the principles of 1795 and 1797.

One hundred and fourteen officers immediately enrolled themselves as members.

Every leader is requested without delay to obtain the signatures of each member in their respective classes, on the next page, preparatory to their being entered into a Circuit Register, to be provided for the purpose.

Your concurrence and hearty co-operation are earnestly requested, as the sooner and the more vigorously the Connexion asserts its rights, the sooner we may expect a speedy and lasting peace.

In furtherance of the objects we have in view, we shall be glad to receive any communication from you, and to afford you all the information and counsel in our power.

Praying that, in so doing, the spirit of wisdom and holiness may guide us in all our proceedings,

We are, dear brethren, yours very affectionately,

W. SMITH, Chairman.

W. WOOD, Secretary.

The address of the chairman is, "WILLIAM SMITH, Esq., of Reddish House, near Stockport."

And that of the secretary, "WILLIAM WOOD, Esq., of Newton Street, Manchester."

David Street Sunday-School Room, Friday, November 7th, 1834.

K, page 271.—*The Pleadings and the Vice-Chancellor's Judgment in Dr. Warren's Case.*

SIR C. WETHERELL, on being called on, said, that the motion he had to make was of a very special nature. It was on behalf of the Rev. Dr. Warren, an eminent Wesleyan minister, who had been unwarrantably, as he supposed, prevented from preaching in certain pulpits to which he had been regularly appointed, and in which he had regularly preached for two years. The bill was filed for the purpose of obtaining from his honour a declaration that Dr. Warren ought to be restored to the ministry in the chapels from which he had been unwarrantably removed. It prayed, "that it may be declared by the decree of this court, that the plaintiff has been suspended from officiating as minister or preacher of the said chapel improperly, and without any authority; and that it may be declared that the plaintiff is entitled to be re-instated in his said office of preacher or minister of the said chapel; and that the said defendants, the trustees of the said chapel, may be directed to permit and suffer the plaintiff to use, occupy, and enjoy the said chapel, and to resume and continue his ministerial duties therein, pursuant to the trusts declared by the said indenture of the first day of October, 1781, and according to the rules and regulations of the said Society; and that the said Robert Newton may be restrained, by the order or injunction of this court, from preaching in the said chapel, or in any manner exercising the office of minister thereof, or intermeddling with the performance of divine worship therein; and that the said defendants (naming them) may be restrained by the like injunction from doing any act or authorizing any act to be done, to prevent the plaintiff duly and regularly performing the duties of preacher or minister of the said chapel."

The learned counsel went on to say, "that Dr. Warren, who asked his honour for such

decree, had been a highly talented and most respectable preacher in the Wesleyan persuasion for upwards of thirty years; and, from circumstances which had occurred, he felt himself obliged to file a bill, and to make a motion adapted to the general prayer of the bill. Dr. Warren had been for two years in what was called the Manchester First Circuit, and up to the middle of the year 1834 had discharged his duties to the great satisfaction of the Circuit, consisting of from two to three thousand members, besides occasional hearers, in the five chapels of which he was the minister or pastor. Such being the case, circumstances occurred which had occasioned an act of usurpation on the part of certain persons, who, if they had looked to their own rules, must have come to the conclusion that they had no earthly right to take the steps which they had taken. He would briefly put his honour in possession of the circumstances. Certain ministers of the Methodist union erected themselves into an illegally-constituted tribunal, and cited Dr. Warren before them; they passed an illegal sentence of suspension, and by that means they not only excluded him from the chapels to which he had been regularly appointed, but have extensively introduced into the chapels of which he is the minister, a gentleman of the name of Newton, whom they have assumed to themselves a right to appoint, giving him the same place and title, and clothing him with the same functions and duties, which they had taken away from the legitimate minister, Dr. Warren."

The learned counsel recited the several trusts on which the chapels were settled, and came to the clause which referred to the Plan of Pacification: "That in case it shall appear to the trustees for the time being of the said trust estate and premises, or the major part of them for the time being, that the doctrine of any preacher or preachers, so to be appointed as aforesaid, is contrary to the Notes or Sermons hereinbefore mentioned, or that the same is erroneous, or that his or their conduct or abilities is or are immoral or deficient; then, and in such case, and as often as it shall so happen, they, the said trustees for the time being, shall proceed according to the rule in that case provided in the Rules of Pacification set forth in the Minutes of the Conference."

Sir Charles Wetherell proceeded to show that the Deed recognised the one hundred preachers, commonly called the Legal Hundred, as the Conference; and that Dr. Warren became one of that number in 1824, and had consequently been a member of that governing body eleven years. He then detailed the proposals for providing a Theological Institution, stated that Dr. Warren objected to the proposed measure, and wished to speak against it in the Conference, found great difficulty in obtaining a hearing, but at length succeeded, and delivered a speech, which he afterwards published, with accompanying observations, after having had the support of thirty preachers in the Conference. The counsel then proceeded, "I have read it over myself; and when I read it over, I could hardly imagine how it were possible that a gentleman—if I may use the expression—was to be prosecuted for such a speech, or, I may add, persecuted; much less could I imagine that this was to take place, not in the body of the Conference, by the Conference meeting, and saying, 'We do not approve of this speech being published,' but by other persons, when Conference did not interfere. However, the speech being published, (this takes place in October, 1834,) some persons thought fit to try Dr. Warren for his speech thus published; and your honour will be surprised to hear how this mode of trial was to take place. If there had been any analogy to a breach of privilege, the Conference were the persons to notice it; although I know no rule upon the subject,—I believe there is no such rule. Denying and protesting that there is such a rule, the Conference ought to have said to Dr. Warren, 'You shall not publish such a speech, nor make any remarks nor observations upon the subject of our discussion.' But that was not done. On the contrary, there appears to have been in this corner of the Manchester Circuit, about two hundred miles from the Conference, a District-meeting called. At a Manchester tribunal, and not before the Conference, Dr. Warren was brought to trial. It was not *in Banco*, in London; but in a secret council held in a corner. A letter was sent to Dr. Warren; it commenced thus:—'Dear Doctor!' *Dear Doctor!* the most civil mode of sending a summons of which he had ever heard. His honour would, however, find that those soft, captivating, beloved terms would end very differently. The person who wrote that letter, who summoned the culprit, who sat as one of the

judges, by and bye became the minister of the places in question. He put out the 'dear Doctor,' and became 'dear Doctor' himself! He escheated him, and then ran away with the escheat! Mr. Robert Newton served the 'dear Doctor' with an indictment, was a member of the court of assize; and then, having mounted the horse, and shoved his friend the 'dear Doctor' from the saddle, rode away out of the Conference-room, and declared himself to be minister of the Circuit. These were the facts. The court must be convinced that a gentleman who was a member of the Conference, for an offence not committed in his Circuit, not for any defect in his pastoral duties, not because he had failed to give satisfaction to the persons who attended by thousands to hear him preach, not for any thing done there, as between him and his communicants; but for the expression of his opinions as to what many besides himself deemed an innovation, was summoned to a secret tribunal by Mr. Newton, having no prosecutor but Mr. Anderson; he was deprived of the office to which he had been legally appointed; and the person who summoned him, who was one of the witnesses against him, who was also one of the judges, and one of his jurymen, that person displaced him: the judge mounted into the vacant seat! Yes, having expelled the criminal, he clothed himself with the robes of office, declared that he had decreed the criminal guilty, and then usurped his place!"

Sir Charles read the charges preferred against Dr. Warren, which have been already before the reader. He then went on to allude to the trial of Dr. Sacheverell; and, having urged several objections, said, "I will undertake to prove, if it be admitted in argument, that this printed speech was a matter upon which he might be arraigned anywhere, and before a court properly constituted; that the court before which he was arraigned was a court without any one of the attributes which such a court ought to have. That District court must have been composed of the individuals I have mentioned,—namely, the preachers of the District, the stewards, the leaders, and the trustees. The stewards, leaders, and trustees are usually laymen. Now I state as a fact, there was no steward, no trustee, no leader present. The court was to consist of four classes: first, ecclesiastics, or the preachers; second, the stewards; third, the trustees; fourth, the leaders, who are certain eminent, respectable persons, frequenters of these places of worship. They try the person. I dare say, in this case, the bailiff upon his summons to the jury wrote, 'Dear Brother;' but he forgot to summon a trustee, or a leader, or a steward; as to all these, he forgot his duty, and summoned the ecclesiastical board only. When I state that this case is thus to be explained, as far as my view of it is concerned, it lies in the narrowest compass possible; I have almost done here,—I literally have done."

The learned counsel then went on repeating his arguments as to the "packed court." He then made some severe remarks as to the exclusion of Mr. Bromley, and on the communication of the decision of the District-meeting to Dr. Warren, repeatedly insisting on the necessity of leaders, trustees, and stewards being present; after which he said, "It may be a very desirable thing to ascertain the cause of these proceedings against Dr. Warren. It may be that he had offended a gentleman of the name of Bunting, who was a strong advocate for the Institution."

Sir William Horne here interposed, saying, "He is not a party on the record."

Sir C. Wetherell resumed,—“He is not a party, and therefore his name is not on the record, and I always like to be correct. The Doctor may have given offence to the Rev. Mr. Bunting, who was to have been president, theological tutor, and foreign secretary. He united all these offices in himself, as to which certain rules were to be observed.”

Sir W. Horne,—“Dr. Warren says so. He states that Mr. Bunting was at the head of the home and foreign department.”

Sir C. Wetherell,—“I have no doubt that, so far as Mr. Bunting is concerned, I could make out a case of impeachment. To the scandal of the ministers of the Wesleyan Methodists, he was to be president, the principal theological tutor, and foreign secretary, possessing the key of dominion, and the whole authority of the union of the Wesleyan Methodists. Your honour may be of opinion that there has been offence taken, (whether rightly or wrongly, I don't inquire,) but that which is made a matter of personal feeling may, by the happy art

of metamorphosis, be made to arrange the machinery so as to make other names appear upon the record, when he was virtually the person who may consider himself injured." After some other observations, the learned counsel closed a very long and able address thus: "Under these circumstances, not being tempted by my learned friend to go into the history of his numerous affidavits, I shall sit down, perfectly contented and satisfied that the character of this gentleman will remain as untouched and unimpeached as it ever has been; and that from this court, when your honour has heard the case and given your opinion upon it, he will go back to the performance of his duties in the District from which he has been suspended, carrying with him the good wishes and good opinions of the thousands of persons who frequent those chapels. If I were to state to your honour the sentiments and feelings entertained, the sentiments of disgust, the injured sensations, in consequence of the mode in which a person so beloved and respected in the District has been treated; if I were to paint to your honour the sensations of injured feeling diffused among the thousands who attended the chapels where this gentleman performed his duties, I should lay before your honour evidence, (I do not know that it would be strictly admissible,) to show that every one of these persons, male and female, felt injured, disgraced, and degraded, by the arbitrary proceeding with which their pastor has been visited. I venture unaffectedly to predict, that he will go out of this court with his character uninjured by the dirty, mean, contemptible attack made upon it in that place where it ought not to have been made, for the purpose of private pique and resentment, masked and concealed under the plausible exterior of doing service to the communion of Wesleyan Methodists; when every calm and dispassionate person sees, that, instead of soothing the feelings, they adopted measures for purposes of excitation and inflicted on that happy, harmonious, pacific, and mutually-confiding body, a sentiment of disgust, which I hope will cease when your honour decides the question, but which has been, in my opinion, most justly excited by the disgraceful and offensive proceedings with which this gentleman has been so unjustly and, as I think, so tyrannically harassed."

Mr. Knight followed as second counsel for the plaintiff. He began by observing, "that he believed it would be admitted on all hands, that unless it could be proved that Dr. Warren was legally removed from his situation of minister of the District in question, he was entitled to the injunction that he now applied for, in order to protect him in the continuance of those duties, and the possession of those rights, with which he had been properly invested." Mr. Knight proceeded to detail at great length, and not with very marked accuracy, the rise and progress of Wesleyan Methodism under the ministerial labours of Wesley and his assistants, and to describe the changes introduced into the polity of the Body, which he very inaptly described as resembling the effects produced by the death of Alexander the Great. He then contended, that the provisions of the Deed of Trust of Oldham Street chapel required the introduction of trustees, leaders, and stewards into the District-meeting; and went on to give his version of the origin of the disputes as to the Institution; and employed strong and abusive language, in describing the mode of trial which had been adopted. The expulsion of Mr. Bromley from the District-meeting also called forth very intemperate observations from this counsel, who closed an eloquent but violent address thus: "Dr. Warren had not been removed from his office by any lawful or properly constituted authority. He had been suspended by a body consisting of those whom he had ably opposed at the meeting of the Conference; and his accusers, and even his judges, were now arrayed as witnesses against him. Was this a course of conduct consistent with those principles that ought to animate and direct the minds of men whose duty it was to administer relief and consolation to their brethren? The only offence that Dr. Warren had been guilty of, if offence it could be called, was the having published a speech in opposition to the views of certain persons who wished to take unto themselves all the profits and emoluments derivable from the situations to be held under the Theological Institution. The reverend gentleman denied the authority of the individuals before whom he appeared, to put him on his trial; and under these circumstances the defendants suspended him in the discharge of his official functions. He (Mr. Knight) submitted that his honour had before him a case which went to prove a flagrant violation of all former proceedings of this Society, a violation of every-

thing that belonged to justice, humanity, or the kindly feelings of our nature; a case unparalleled and unprecedented in his experience, and, he believed, in that of every one whom he saw around him."

Mr. Kindersley followed on the same side, but advanced nothing that it is necessary to quote at length. He commented on the affidavits, called attention to important points of evidence, and concluded by expressing his opinion, "that the court was bound to grant the prayer of the petition."

Mr. Parker briefly addressed the court to the same effect. This was the plaintiff's case, which occupied the whole of Saturday.

On the opening of the court on Monday morning, Sir William Horne rose to state the case of the defendants. He said, that, in so doing, it was not his wish either to confuse or confound the case, although such an intention had been attributed to him by his learned friend on the other side. All that he had to do was, to bring before the court the real circumstances of the case, and endeavour to explain certain statements made by his learned friends on the other side, which he considered tended to misrepresent the conduct and motives of his clients. Amongst the enormities of which they were accused in the metaphorical language of Sir Charles Wetherell, it was stated that the usurping judges for whom he appeared, had thought proper, like the inquisitors of Spain, to put the party upon trial, and by their sentence to subject him to a subsistence on bread and water, or to deprive him of his living. His clients had done no such thing toward Dr. Warren. They had not allowed him to beg; and it was not their fault if he had not every day a good dinner, and a good digestion. They had not deprived him of any part of his temporal emoluments, although his friends had directed their argument to that subject.

He should now draw the attention of the court to the real question between the parties; because, before that was settled, his honour could hardly know the value of the arguments. It was purely an ecclesiastical question, or a spiritual question growing out of an ecclesiastical transaction; and although a temporal question arose out of it, yet it was only the result of the previous spiritual one. His honour might have to decide before this argument closed, whether, as to the spiritual question, he had any jurisdiction at all. If, however, his honour thought he had any, then the question would be, whether he could be properly called upon to exercise it? His honour was no doubt perfectly familiar with the history of the Methodists; and it was not his intention to waste time in going at any length into general observations on the subject. It did appear necessary, however, that the court should not lose sight of one peculiarity of this respectable sect, which was extremely important in this case, namely, the truly religious and spiritual object of its patriarchal founder. It was well known that his object was of a spiritual nature, in so far as it referred to the duties and practices of the ministers of our common religion; and the administration of temporal matters was so ordered that those were considered as entirely subordinate to the great spiritual and ecclesiastical polity on which his system was established. It was also a leading object with him to secure a fair, due, subordinate, and meek (he would not say passive) obedience to the Conference at large; in short, to secure from all, down to the lowest ecclesiastical servants under his jurisdiction, a ready and quiet obedience. He appointed and dismissed ministers, and subjected his clergy to the influence of proper authority.

Without stating more upon the general subject, he begged to advert to what his honour had not been informed of, nor invited to look to, namely, what had been the conduct of the plaintiff himself in this case. His honour was aware, that the plaintiff was what is called, in the polity of the Methodists, a superintendent of a Circuit. There was a jurisdiction which belonged to the preachers of the Circuits, or those that preside over them; but the great question in dispute was as to the District-committees, which were formed of the preachers of the various Circuits, of which his honour had heard so much, but he would state it more accurately. His honour had been asked not to give less attention to the case than to any other, because it was of a religious nature; he called upon him also not to do so, under a protest against his jurisdiction in strictly religious matters. His honour had been told, and he was not instructed to deny, that the plaintiff was a highly respectable man. He did not detract from his merit, but he could not but lament that a gentleman, who was a

pious member of such a communion as this, should have thought it right to tell his honour, and to arrogate something of a merit to himself, that he was the first in this Connexion, which had subsisted now for nearly a century, that had ever come into a Court of Chancery. The inference it was intended his honour should draw was this,—not that he was a litigious man; not that he wished, contrary to the principles of the Founder of this sect, to mix secular litigation with religious matters; but that, notwithstanding his love of peace, and his meekness, and subordination to ecclesiastical authority within the Connexion; yet still, that the enmity that had been practised against him in the present case had been such, that it was necessary, without violating the charity of the Gospel or the meekness of religion, to come into this court, and, for the first time in the space of a century, to call upon it as a secular court to interfere. His honour would judge by and bye, whether there had been any ground for this assertion, and the facts built upon it. It would frequently happen in this Body, as in other bodies, that all the members of the Conference upon some occasions did not agree; and from an unhappy division of opinion on a certain occasion in the Conference, arose the merit, if it were a merit, of the plaintiff, of being the only dissentient in the committee. He did not mean to say that because the Doctor was alone, therefore he might not be right; for it had happened that a minority, and even a single individual, had viewed a subject much more clearly than a large majority; but the question his honour would have to look into was, whether the Doctor, being a mere unit in an assembly whose fundamental principles were those of meekness and peace, and bound by the laws of the Connexion to submit to the decision of the majority, had acted well in not submitting to that decision in silence and peace, instead of publishing pamphlets which he was under the painful necessity of bringing before his honour, in order to give him the best evidence of what the real facts of this case were, and the spirit in which the Doctor had conducted himself. When the pamphlets were read, his honour would form a more correct estimate than he had been hitherto able to do, of the temper, spirit, and judgment of the Doctor on the one hand, and of the temper, spirit, and judgment of those, on the other, whom the Doctor had thought proper so improperly to abuse.

He thought his honour must have been struck with the almost entire omission of his friend, in bringing before the court the subject-matter of the charge, or what was the cause which compelled his clients (the defendants,) in the discharge of a painful duty, to cite the plaintiff before the District-committee. So far as general observations could go, abundance of odium had been thrown upon his clients, whose conduct counsel had been instructed to represent as being about the worst in any community, Christian or heathen, ever brought before a court. Whether this was in accordance with the genuine spirit of Christianity, or with the peculiar spirit of this most respectable, meek, and pious community, his honour would judge when he heard the whole case. He would now introduce to his honour the Doctor himself; because, meaning not to exaggerate, but being bound not to omit what he believed to be the truth, he should state all which he considered to be his duty to his clients, as well as the plaintiff, to state, and not more than the truth. The best mode he could take would be to let the Doctor introduce himself; he should, therefore, without ceremony, introduce him as he appeared in the publication which he held in his hand, which he supposed he (the Doctor) did not wish to withdraw; and which he was sure might be safely trusted as evidence, as he should show to the court, “that the Doctor was a person who never said or did anything but most advisedly.” He should begin, therefore, with the pamphlet. Whether pamphleteering was one of the attributes of Methodism he knew not; but he felt persuaded that such pamphleteering as this was a direct violation of all the best and most fundamental principles of a Christian community. He put it to Dr. Warren to consider whether, when he issued that publication from the press, he was not conscious he was sending a firebrand into the whole Connexion. He would ask him, also, whether, if he protested against three hundred and ninety-nine of this assembly, each one of them had not an equal right to protest against him, and to write a pamphlet in defence of his own conduct, and in condemnation of his (Dr. Warren’s); and whether it was the intention or wish of the founder of Methodism that every question that came before the Conference should be the subject of a pamphlet?

Sir William Horne then read the paragraph from Dr. Warren's pamphlet, in which he describes the rise of suspicion in his own mind by the nomination of Dr. Bunting to the presidency of the Institution, and produced it as a fair specimen of the anti-Christian and personal nature of the tract. He then went on to say, he did not mean to contend that persons ought not to publish their opinions, under certain proper modifications, upon religious topics ; such publications might not only be very innocent, but even very laudable, as there were religious matters which might not only affect the interests of the clergy, but also the interests of the public at large ; however, he thought that Dr. Warren ought to have abstained from the publication of such a pamphlet, which he must have well known was causing dissensions of the most mischievous nature amongst a very large religious society which had hitherto enjoyed undisturbed peace and harmony. Now the Doctor had published this pamphlet, not with any view to enlighten the world as to his reasons for objecting to the mere project for educating the junior preachers of the Society, but purely to make it a vehicle for accusing others, by calumniating the members of the Conference, and misrepresenting the conduct and motives of that body of men, which, according to the admission of his learned friends on the other side, was to be considered as the great spiritual guide in all matters affecting the Wesleyan interests. What he complained of in the pamphlet was, that Dr. Warren, from some supposed wrongs and injuries which he imagined had been put upon him, turned round and became an assailant, and inflicted the same wrongs and injuries of which he complained himself, upon other persons who could not defend themselves, unless they could bring themselves to follow Dr. Warren's example, and publish scurrilous pamphlets in reply. There could be no doubt that Dr. Warren's pamphlet was a most gross libel upon the character and conduct of the Conference, and that it was, in the language of the charges brought against him, "a direct violation of the first principles of the Wesleyan Connexion."

The learned counsel then read a great part of Dr. Warren's published speech, and severely commented on several parts of it. He then drew attention "to a pamphlet which had been published subsequent to the Special District-meeting, and which purported to be an account of its proceedings." It first set forth the charges which his learned friend had, with so much humour, termed an indictment, and which were sent to Dr. Warren, with a letter as respectful and proper as could be written. Then it described, in the bitterest spirit of sarcasm and ironical personality, the reverend gentlemen, of whom the court, that had been called so tyrannical, oppressive, and despotic, was composed. The Rev. Joseph Taylor, who was the president of the last Conference, and who was sent for from London to officiate as chairman on that occasion, was likened to Judge Jefferies ; and the whole proceeding was thus modestly characterized by way of question : "Was ever a more complete piece of Jefferyism played off since Judge Jefferies went to his own place ?" Now, he would ask, whether the inferential application of that term, "gone to his own place," which had been made upon the worst of mankind, to the president of the Conference, the highest officer the Connexion recognised, was not as awful an offence against the spiritual commands of the Divine Master of him who uttered it, as any clergyman could commit ; and whether it did not merit the severest reprobation it was possible for any court, spiritual or temporal, to pass upon it ? The Rev. Mr. Anderson, the superintendent of the Third Manchester Circuit, was called the "attorney-general" who drew up the indictment ; the Rev. Mr. Newton, the chairman of the District, Mr. Jonathan Crowther, the secretary, and other most respectable and exemplary persons, were all spoken of with the greatest ridicule ; and the amiable Mr. Grindrod, who was on the other side of the Atlantic, was not less the subject of attack. He would put it to the common sense of all who read the Doctor's pamphlet, whether, if the parties had been placed in some distant barbarous country, and the Doctor had been armed with a tomahawk instead of a pen, it was not probable that Mr. Grindrod would have received a stronger proof of the Doctor's feeling towards him.

It had been stated by the learned counsel on behalf of Dr. Warren, that Mr. Bromley, whose assistance the reverend gentleman had sought and obtained at the District-meeting, had been ejected or turned out of the room for no possible cause. What was the fact ? Mr. Bromley was a gentleman not in any way connected with the District in question ; but, being a preacher belonging to the Wesleyan Methodist Society, he was

allowed, at the request of Dr. Warren, to be present at the District-meeting, on the express condition that he should take no part whatever in the proceedings. Mr. Bromley, however, thought fit to interrupt the proceedings of the assembly, by repeated and frequent communications with Dr. Warren, and also by taking copious notes of what was going forward. At length, he was requested to withdraw to a distance from his friend the Doctor: and he then took the opportunity of whispering into the ear of one of the assembly, that the conduct of the parties who had taken upon themselves to bring his friend to trial was "most consummate cruelty." Now he (Sir William Horne) could not imagine anything more unseemly, more calculated to bring on an individual making use of such an expression, the disapprobation of those persons who had allowed him to be present at their deliberations. What would be the feeling of the judge whom he had the honour of addressing, or any judicial functionary placed in a similar situation, if a party, who happened to have had the privilege of enjoying a seat on the bench, had been guilty of the folly and imprudence of whispering in the ear of the judge any expression calculated to impugn the justice or impartiality of the tribunal over which that judge had been appointed to preside? But what was the conduct of Dr. Warren after that gentleman had declined to be tried by the court, whose authority in the first instance he had not thought of calling in question? The court having been put in possession of the meek and Christian spirit which breathed throughout this gentleman's pamphlet, and so distinguished his disinterested opposition to the wishes of the three hundred and ninety-nine out of four hundred members of the Conference, he would now read a resolution which was subsequently passed at a meeting where the learned Doctor himself presided. What did his honour think was the resolution? Why, the reverend gentleman, who now came before the court complaining of the harsh treatment which he had met with from the defendants, had thought proper to give his sanction and approbation to a resolution, which was to this effect:—"So deeply are we impressed with the awful risk of indecision in the present struggle, that, after long and anxious deliberation, we are constrained to come to the conclusion, as a Circuit, to withhold, from this time, all supplies whatever of money, except those of the weekly contributions of class-money, and the quarterly contributions at the renewal of the tickets, until the present important question between the people and the Conference be adjusted."

This short sentence unmasked the whole nature and object of the present struggle; and he now most unhesitatingly said, however respectable Dr. Warren individually might be, and however sincere his opposition to the plans of the whole Conference, he had not come to the court on his own funds; he was, personally, a mere cipher, a nonentity, a man of straw, technically speaking; the honest and undisguised question being, "Dr. Warren and the people against the Conference." That was "the important question;" and the Doctor's plan to accomplish it was to "stop the supplies." Liberty from the domination of these tyrannical oppressors was said to be the aim of Dr. Warren; and though this must be admitted to savour very strongly of liberty, the court would decide whether it was that Gospel liberty which their pious Founder inculcated, and for which he so jealously contended. Let the court pause for a moment, and look at the direful consequences of the attempt, should it unfortunately succeed. Much had been said of the awful effects which would result from the arbitrary proceedings of the District court; but the consequences of stopping the supplies must inevitably be, that the superannuated ministers, the widows of ministers, who, after lives of great usefulness and benevolence, were now reposing in peaceful silence in the tomb, and the helpless orphan, would have their only means of support torn from them, and must, in truth, be reduced to the painful alternative of bread and water, or starvation. He thought it necessary to go thus far into this part of the case, for the double purpose of showing from the publications what the real nature of the question was, and the necessity of looking into that part of the conduct of Dr. Warren, which had been so carefully suppressed by his learned friends. And now, when there was no question of temporal maintenance, finding that it was a purely ecclesiastical question, would this temporal court, upon such a record, and upon facts full of doubts, mix itself up with the spiritual concerns of this great Connexion, and set a precedent, the effect of which would be to destroy for ever the peace and union of a Society hitherto unbroken and uncontaminated by litigation?

The only possible benefit that could accrue to Dr. Warren from his success in the present instance, was the liberty to preach alternately in the two chapels in question, for the space of some three or four months; and this was to be put in opposition to the probable evil that a discussion of this question might bring on hundreds of thousands of individuals of the persuasion to which the reverend gentleman belonged. He entreated the court to pause before it attempted to interfere with the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of this body.

Sir William Horne then proceeded to show that as Wesley exercised supreme power in the Connexion during his life, so the District-meeting was appointed by the Conference of 1791 to exercise the same power during the intervals of the Conferences; that this view was confirmed by the fact, that the Conference of 1792 gave the District-committee authority to depose and deal with the chairman of the District, if found guilty, and to suspend him; arguing that it was a strange logic which allowed that the District-committee could depose and suspend its chairman, and yet denied that it had power to deal with an ordinary preacher. The learned counsel concluded a brilliant address, which occupied four hours and a half in delivery, with the following words: "Was it to be said that after a practice of forty years, during which there had been upwards of seventy cases of suspension for similar errors and misconduct to that of which Dr. Warren had been guilty, the Court of Chancery would take upon itself to overturn all that this respectable and numerous Body of Dissenters had felt themselves authorized in doing, in instances where the Conference, the supreme power, had invariably approved of what the District-meeting had performed? Was the court now to be told, on the evidence of Mr. Moore, that this was not the meaning of the constitution? or after this acquiescence in, and acting upon, the decisions of the District-committee, could that court be called upon to interfere? Had this committee tried and acquitted Dr. Warren, and had the trustees then proceeded to try him according to the Articles of Pacification, would it not have been justly said the case had been decided by the proper tribunal, and the trustees had no right to interfere? Was his honour a Methodist judge? A court of competent jurisdiction had given a decision: or, if it had not jurisdiction, then that plaint was ground of appeal to the Conference. He could not help characterizing the whole proceeding as a wanton, dangerous, and unnecessary experiment, calculated to subvert the peace, harmony, and benevolent feeling of this communion of Christians, having for its object to gratify the personal views of a single individual, who could derive no substantial benefit from it; and ultimately tending to destroy the happiness and prosperity of a vast Body of Christians, who had remained in one unbroken link since the period of their foundation. In conclusion, he trusted that his honour would pause before he took upon himself to do away with all those decisions to which a religious body so constituted as the Conference of the Wesleyan Methodists had come, and with which decision he humbly, though respectfully, submitted the Court of Chancery had not the jurisdiction to interfere."

The vice-chancellor then proceeded to give his judgment. He said, this case had been argued with very great ability on both sides; and he thought so with good reason, because he did not concur with the observation that Mr. Rolfe made, that the question was of a trifling nature,—he did not think any question was trifling which concerned the well-being, perhaps the existence, of a Body such as that which the Wesleyan Methodists constituted. To that Body, it was a fact, that we were indebted for a large portion of the religious feeling of this country, and a great portion of that in other parts of the world; and when it was recollected that the Body itself owed its existence, or first formation, to an individual so distinguished as the late John Wesley was, and that from time to time there had arisen out of that Body many a man as highly distinguished in mind as could be found in any body of men,—for instance, he would name (one for all) the late Dr. Adam Clarke,—no person who could have any understanding of what religion is, or regard for this sect, could do otherwise than look upon the Wesleyan Methodists with the most affectionate concern. The question before him was, whether this court ought to interfere in a case in which the trustees of a chapel had virtually excluded Dr. Warren from that chapel, to which he was unquestionably appointed in a lawful manner. It was said, this court had no jurisdiction in such a case: that was a point to which he could not accede, as it appeared to him from the

deeds themselves, which had the effect of making certain persons trustees for the chapel, for certain purposes, that a trust was unquestionably created; and he did not know why, because the trust affected certain persons of a voluntary society, it was not to be regarded by this court as any other trusts in the common concerns of life would be regarded. His own opinion was, that the persons were called trustees in the strict sense of this court, and, therefore, had a legal dominion over those chapels, but yet had the power to hold them, not for the benefit of themselves, but for others on whose account the trust was constituted. In such a case, this court must of course exercise a jurisdiction as well as in other cases. Then he must consider, whether, under the circumstances of this case, it were right that the court should interfere; and it was to be observed, that these trust deeds, according to his apprehension, were to be considered not merely with regard to the words contained in themselves, but they must be considered in connexion with the laws as part only of the machinery by which the whole Body of Methodists, amounting, it was said, to nearly a million, was kept together, and by which Methodism itself was carried on. He thought he should be taking a very narrow view of the case, if he were merely to look at the words of the deed, or that he might not consider, from the nature of the thing, whether some circumstances extrinsic of the deed must not be taken into consideration. He must take into view the principle laid down by Lord Eldon, in a case which he had formerly occasion to refer to,—he meant the case of the Duke of Bedford's tenants and the British Museum. It was there contended by the plaintiffs, that the persons who represented the British Museum were bound by written and express covenants contained in a deed, by which the property then in question became severed from some members of the Bedford family one hundred and fifty years before the question arose. There was no doubt that those things complained of by the plaintiff fell within the strict terms of the covenant, yet Lord Eldon thought, that in order to decide it fairly, before the court should interfere, he must regard not only what was in the deed, but the circumstances under which it was made, and the implied agreement and understanding between the parties, although not one word of it appeared on the face of the deed itself. Now in the present case, the Rev. John Wesley having instituted Methodism, and given rise to the Society called the Methodists, it appeared that in 1781 the first deed was made which regarded the (Oldham Street) chapel, to which the plaintiff, Dr. Warren, belonged; and that deed being made in John Wesley's lifetime, he conveyed the tenements in question to certain trustees, upon trust, "that they and the survivors of them, and their heirs and assigns, and the trustees for the time being, should permit and suffer John Wesley, and such other persons as the said John Wesley should for that purpose from time to time nominate and appoint, in like manner, during his life, to have, use, and enjoy the same premises respectively, for the like purposes as aforesaid; and after the decease of the said John Wesley, then upon further trust, that the said trustees, and the survivors of them, and the trustees for the time being, should permit and suffer such person and persons, and for such time and times as should be appointed at the yearly Conferences of the people called Methodists, in London, Bristol, or Leeds, to have and enjoy the same premises, for the purposes aforesaid." Then it imposed upon the preachers certain provisos, as to the doctrines which such persons should preach; and then there was a particular proviso upon which a great deal of observation had been made, namely, that if any person so appointed to preach, should, in the judgment of the trustee or trustees for the time being, be deemed an unfit or improper person, and the committee of Conference should not appoint another in his stead, within two months after a regular notice, containing their reasons, then it shall be lawful for the trustees to appoint such other person as they shall think fit, until the next Conference. Now, that was a power in the nature plainly of an executing power,—that was a power given to the trustees; but that deed did not contain anything which put in terms any obligation upon the trustees, in case they thought the person improper, to permit him to enjoy the chapel. He did not see anything in that deed of that nature, nor anything beyond what could be inferred from the first part of the deed, which was generally creating the trust; but it struck him, that if the trustees should conceive, in fairly exercising their opinion of the individual, that, in consequence of the act committed, it became necessary to interfere immediately, and prevent such person from preaching, then the deed gave them the

power to take the course prescribed by it. The course prescribed, in the first instance, was to give the committee of the Conference a power to appoint a substitute; and in case they did not exercise that power, then there was an express power given to the trustees to appoint a substitute. Then there was the deed of 1826, [the Oldham Road Deed,] which was long after the death of Mr. Wesley, and after certain Minutes which had taken place in the years 1791, 1792, 1793, and 1797, which had been so much the subject of observation. By that deed, the trustees were to permit the chapel to be used and enjoyed, for the purposes of religious worship, for the service of Almighty God, by the Society of people called Methodists, late in the Connexion with the late John Wesley, and for that purpose to suffer such persons as should be appointed by the Conference, and no other person or persons whomsoever, except as after provided, to have the free and uninterrupted use of the chapel. Then there was a proviso as to the moral character of the party so appointed being unexceptionable; and that he preach no other doctrines than those of Mr. Wesley, described in the deed of 1781. Then it was provided, that in case the trustees thought he was immoral, or deficient in abilities, or erroneous in doctrine, or had broken the Rules of Pacification concerning the Lord's Supper, the trustees for the time being should proceed according to certain rules laid down: that was a rule amongst those regulations he had already referred to. Now, it was observable, therefore, that this deed did, in a general way, refer to the use of the chapel, for the purpose of religious worship, and for the service of Almighty God, by the Society of Methodists. There was a circumstance which he conceived was not to be kept out of sight, in commenting upon the deed, and the duties of those who were to exercise the trusteeship under the deed. Now, he must consider, that it was never intended by the parties who have continued to belong to the Methodist Society in succession, since they were appointed that there should be anything but one general object pursued, otherwise, perhaps, than what might be mere bye-laws and rules of a local kind; but that it was the object of all the parties to form one Body, to be governed by one set of laws. Then the parties who were appointed under the deed of 1781, must look into the rules then existing, for the manner in which they were to execute their trust; but it appeared to him, that if, in the progress of time, the parties who were trustees for the time being, 1781, received into their chapel the person who was appointed by the yearly Conference to preach, they must take that person and deal with him, not merely upon what was the general expression in the trust deed, but they should conform to all the rules since from time to time enacted by the Conference, which all parties admitted to be the supreme legislative and executive body, and since then actually regulating the Connexion. Now, with regard to the right of the District court to dismiss a preacher who was appointed by the yearly Conference, it appeared to him to be subject to some doubt. When it became necessary, by the death of John Wesley, who, during his lifetime, exercised an unlimited power and control over all the affairs, both spiritual and temporal, of the Society—his death having put an end to the exercise of that power—when it became necessary to consider in whom that power should be vested, the Conference met together in 1791, when it was agreed to separate and divide into Districts England, Ireland, and Scotland; and then the Conference framed the rule giving to the assistant or president of a District power to summon the preachers of the District who are in full connexion, on any critical case, which, according to his judgment, merited such an interference; and the said preachers, and so many of them as could attend, should assemble at the times and places appointed by the assistant, and should form a committee for the purpose of determining the business for which they were called. They should choose a chairman, and their decision was to be final until the next meeting of the Conference, when the chairman was to lay the minutes of the proceedings before the court; provided, nevertheless, nothing was done contrary to the resolutions of the Conference. In 1792 that Rule was altered by giving the chairman authority to call a District-committee, but the chairman was not to interfere with any other Circuit but his own. The chairman was to send a copy in writing of the charges to the accused, and he was to summon the preachers of the District to attend. In 1793, another alteration was made relative to the case in which the chairman himself might be the party accused; in such case he and his accuser were each to choose two clergymen of the District to form a court. His honour then

read the fifth of these Resolutions of 1794, to this effect :—"It is agreed that the management of the temporal and spiritual concerns of the Society shall be separated as far as the purposes of peace and harmony can be answered thereby, or as they have ever been separated in times of the greatest peace and harmony, viz.—1. The temporal concerns shall be managed by the stewards chosen for that purpose, &c. 2. The spiritual concerns shall be managed by the preachers, who have ever appointed leaders, chosen stewards, and admitted members into, and expelled them from the Society, consulting their brethren, the stewards and leaders." This passage, his honour observed, seemed to reserve to the ecclesiastical part of the Connexion the fullest powers over ecclesiastical concerns. His honour then read the Articles of Pacification of 1795, in which, he said, it was obvious the thing mainly had in view was the subject-matters then in dispute in the Society concerning the administration of the Lord's Supper, Baptism, &c. It was made a question whether the fifth of the regulations as to discipline, that "no preacher shall be suspended or removed from his Circuit by any District-committee, except he have the privilege of the trial before-mentioned," applied to all cases of suspension and removal, or to those cases only which occur in the document where this passage is found,—that is, the four cases of a preacher being "immoral, erroneous in doctrine, deficient in abilities, or that he has broke any of the preceding rules." These were the four cases in which the laity, in conjunction with the preachers, were given jurisdiction over the ecclesiastics. It appeared to his honour that the passage could only be interpreted by referring it to those four cases. The mode of construction which would render this passage applicable to every case, was contrary to the received construction and application of the English language, and involved the blunder of giving by implication at the end of these rules a general power to the new tribunal of laity and clergy, whereas that power in the very outset was restricted to four enumerated cases,—a blunder which no intelligent person competent to use the English language upon any subject could commit. His honour then referred to the collection of Rules which the Conference in 1797 had individually subscribed, and which had been subsequently published in a separate pamphlet. This "Code of Laws" confirmed the view he had given, that the Plan of Pacification did not supersede the regular District-committee; for it contained the Resolutions of 1791 and the two or three succeeding years respecting District-meetings; and he commented on some slight alterations in their phraseology as evidence of the care which had been bestowed in harmonizing them. He then showed that the passage in the Address of 1797, on which stress had been laid, did not mean that the Conference had set aside the District-committee in spiritual matters. Instead of this, the Conference had made, at the same time, additional regulations for the express and avowed purpose of making the District-committees "more effective" for managing, in the intervals of the Conference, the spiritual and ecclesiastical concerns of the Body. His honour continued :—"Then the question comes to this : Whether there did exist a case in which fairly and lawfully the District-committee had the power to interfere? If I understand the affidavits correctly, supposing there was a case made out that justified their interference, then there could not be any departure from the terms of the regulations, and everything done by the District-committee must be considered as a lawful proceeding. There was a complaint made by a particular individual. It was put into writing, and sent to the party accused. The president of the Conference was sent for, and the persons competent to form a District-committee were assembled with him. It really appears to me, that although this court does exercise a jurisdiction over any particular trust, it cannot exercise any jurisdiction in the nature of an appellant jurisdiction over a local court of a voluntary society which shall be managed, on certain matters, by a local court; and I therefore do not think, that I am at liberty to say, if I thought the District-committee had acted wrong, that all they have done is a nullity, because I happen to differ from a court over which I have no jurisdiction. But I must say, that I cannot think the proceedings of this District-committee are justly subject to the vehement charges that have been adduced; I do not think that any such violence or tyranny as was charged has been, in any respect, made out. Had there been anything in the shape of a legal fraud, we should of course have been able to discover it; but none such seems to have existed. It is to be observed, that the matter which attracted the notice of the parties opposed to Dr. Warren,

was the publication of a certain speech, which I have now before me, and which it is not immaterial to consider when we recollect that it is a part of the complaint against the District-committee, that they excluded Dr. Warren's witness from the room during the discussion,—one is almost inclined to exclaim, in the language of a tribunal which was very much prejudiced, "What need have we of any further witness?"—because they had the publication before them which Dr. Warren never attempted to deny. I am extremely unwilling to make any observation on a person who, had he belonged to the Established Church, I might have almost considered in the light of a father; and whom, belonging to the persuasion that he does, I must still reverence and respect, on account of the very high character which he has always so deservedly borne; but called on to exercise the judicial functions of a judge, I must speak without respect to persons, and must say, that this speech of Dr. Warren's appears to me to contain passages which, whenever a cooler moment arrives, and Dr. Warren shall be enabled to reflect calmly and seriously on what it contains, he will be seriously sorry that he has committed to paper. The sole and principal object of the late John Wesley was, by means of a Society, voluntarily attached to himself, to set forth such an example of unblemished and superior meekness and humility as could only emanate from the purest principles of the Christian religion. Independent of the suggestions and exhortations of that eminent divine on this subject, every preacher of the Wesleyan Methodist Society must be aware, that among the class of persons whom the great Redeemer of mankind had declared should be excluded from the kingdom of heaven, the reviler was expressly named. Now it appears that Dr. Warren published a pamphlet respecting the Wesleyan Theological Institution, in the beginning of which he uses these words:—"I think it my duty to give the Body generally an opportunity of examining the validity of the grounds on which I opposed this measure; to record my protest against it; and at the same time to set myself right with those who may have received impressions artfully circulated to my disadvantage, for the purpose of prejudicing my cause, and rendering my statements unavailing." Then again:—"Towards the conclusion of the Conference, that individual (alluding to the Rev. Robert Newton,) with an affected air of frankness, volunteered the following communication to me." This expression "affected," applied to a gentleman of Mr. Newton's respectability and character, I consider most unseemly. Again, in page 8 of his pamphlet, occurs the expression, "the credulous secretary." And in page 9 there is the following passage:—"It was on this occasion that Mr. Bunting first presumed, amidst the surprised silence of the committee, to insinuate that I was under the influence of some mean, some unhallowed, motive in dissenting from my brethren; adding, in a tone and manner peculiarly his own, that my opposition was 'the most unprincipled that he ever knew;' sub-joining, after a pause, 'and I speak advisedly.'" To use that expression to Mr. Bunting, "in a tone and manner peculiarly his own," is most indecent. I am bound to admit, with Sir Charles Wetherell, that a great deal of this would go for nothing had it occurred in the squabbles or reviews of the party violence of a debate. But consider that Dr. Warren was bound by his profession to exhibit a calm and dignified patience even under injury, and not to exhibit recrimination to any human being whatever. There is one more passage in one of Dr. Warren's pamphlets, to which I must refer. It is his comparison of the Rev. Joseph Taylor, the president of the Conference, to Judge Jeffries, who is represented, in the language applied to an unhappy individual in the New Testament, as having "gone to his own place." It so happened, that I lately had occasion to turn to the passage on which Dr. A. Clarke has shown such a singular exuberance of Christian love in his remarks upon Judas Iscariot; but while I admire the charity of the amiable and learned commentator, I cannot adopt his conclusion. Now, it appears to me, that however competent an inspired apostle was to decide on the final destiny of an individual, it ill becomes poor, short-sighted, fallible men awfully to presume on such a subject; and I cannot but hope, that Dr. Warren will, ere long, deeply regret that he wrote the passage in question, in which he has ventured to represent a notorious individual as having met the doom of Judas, and, has then compared him to an excellent individual who, no doubt, for his worth, has been raised to the highest office in the Methodist Body; and, by such comparison, has implied, that he deserves a similar fate.—It was impossible (he continued) for any one to read the speech which Dr.

Warren had published without feeling convinced that its effect would, in a great measure, be to create such a schism in this Society of Methodists, which, if not speedily put an end to, would lead to the total destruction and annihilation of the Society itself. This being the state of the case, he was called on by the plaintiffs to say to the trustees, that every act done by the District-committee was to go for nothing, and that they must look upon Dr. Warren as if no one of the transactions detailed had ever taken place. Before the court took on itself to interfere in a case like the present, it must be satisfied that there had been such a breach of the articles of the trust deed as justified its interference. However other tribunals might differ from the opinion he now expressed, he did not think such a case had been made out as would justify his interfering in the present instance. He had himself felt deep interest in the discussion, and in the importance that was attached to the decision of the question by all parties concerned. He hoped if he had said anything at all painful to the feelings of Dr. Warren, that he would be forgiven by that reverend gentleman for having made certain observations on his pamphlet solely from a sense of the duty he owed to the public in the discharge of his official functions. He was heartily sorry for the necessity which had required him thus to speak. Had the pamphlet been an ordinary publication, he should have passed over it without observation; but coming from an individual of his rank, station, and character in the Society, he could not help comparing it with that pure and elevated standard at which he ought to have aimed. The Conference would put an end to the dispute in the course of a short time, but all he would for the present say was that he had no jurisdiction to interfere. He could not conclude this subject better than by addressing the Methodists in the words made use of by their own Conference in 1795:—"O, brethren, be as zealous for peace and unity in your respective Societies as your preachers have been in this blessed Conference. Let the majorities and minorities on both sides exercise the utmost forbearance towards each other: let them mutually concede one to the other as far as possible: and, by thus bearing each other's burdens, fulfil the law of Christ. Let all resentment be buried in eternal oblivion; and let contention and strife be for ever banished from the borders of our Israel."

L, page 275.—*The Lord Chancellor's Judgment in the Case of Dr. Warren.*

ALL the avenues and doors leading into the court were this morning crowded to excess long before the hour at which the lord chancellor was to arrive; and before the hall doors were opened, many ladies and gentlemen had obtained admission by the private entrances. When the hall doors were opened, a little before ten o'clock, the rush in court was tremendous, and every station within hearing was literally crammed by both sexes.

The lord chancellor took his seat a few minutes after ten o'clock, and immediately proceeded, in a most impressive and distinct manner, to deliver the following JUDGMENT:—

His lordship said,—In this case, I entirely agree with the observations made by his honour the vice-chancellor, in the commencement of his judgment, which has been handed up to me, that this cannot justly be considered as a case of trifling importance. It is a case of some importance, even in a pecuniary point of view, to Dr. Warren: not with reference to his actual position, but as it may affect his future position and interest as connected with this Society. But independently of that, every question that comes into a court of justice, affecting the feelings of great masses of people, particularly where they are associated together for objects of religion, can never be considered as of trifling importance.

I have looked with considerable attention into the volumes which have been handed up to me, containing the Minutes of the proceedings of the Society. They breathe a spirit of meekness and of Christian feeling throughout; and I trust I may be permitted to express my regret that, in a Society so constituted, for such objects, with such motives, and with such feelings, dissensions of this description should have been introduced; and I must suggest whether it would not be advisable to make some endeavour for the interests of this Society, by some attempt towards accommodation, to put an end to those dissensions which have given rise to the present proceedings.

However, having made these observations, the only duty which I have to discharge, is a

duty of a widely different nature. I am called upon merely to determine as to the legal rights of these parties. I am to decide the question, (for that is the main question,) as to whether or not Dr. Warren has been legally suspended from his functions, as a minister, by the District-committee. To this point, therefore, I shall direct my sole attention, not introducing any observations with respect to the conduct of the different parties, except what the course of proceedings shall strictly and of necessity require.

First, then, the question resolves itself into two points :—Has the District-committee power to suspend a preacher? And, if the District-committee have the power so to suspend, the next question will be, Have they regularly exercised that power in the present instance?

The first document that was referred to by the counsel on both sides, and naturally referred to, was the trust deed; or, I should rather say, the trust deeds, under which these chapels are held. By the provisions in two trust deeds, the trustees hold the chapels subject to the trust, to permit the preacher who is appointed by the Conference to use the chapels for the purpose of religious worship. It is said, that Dr. Warren was the preacher appointed by the Conference; that they were bound, therefore, to allow him to use the chapels, and that they had no right to permit them to be used by any other person or persons. But I apprehend, that if the Conference, which is the legislative body of this Society,—if the Conference have appointed a mode by which a preacher may be suspended, or removed accordingly, and he is regularly and legally suspended or removed, he can no longer be considered, within the meaning of this trust, as the minister appointed by the Conference. Therefore it appears to me, that that argument, considering the nature and object of the trust deed, entirely fails.

Another clause in the trust deed is of this description: there is a proviso, that the trustees shall proceed according to the Act of Pacification, where it shall appear to them that any preacher has offended in the manner therein described. It does not appear to me, however, notwithstanding this proviso, that it leads, necessarily, or even naturally, to the conclusion that a preacher may not be removed by other modes pointed out by the Society. No such consequence, as it appears to me, legitimately flows from that provision. These are the arguments arising out of the trust deeds. The trust deeds, however, were not much relied upon, in argument, by the counsel on either side. I have no doubt they saw the arguments by which they might be met, and therefore not much reliance seems to have been placed upon them.

This, then, brings me to the consideration of the arguments arising out of the acts of the Conference. It is by the acts of the Conference principally, that this question must be decided: and what, taking all those acts together, is the legitimate and proper construction of them, with reference to the point now under consideration? There is no doubt that Mr. Wesley himself possessed and exercised the power of suspension and of removal. During his time, he possessed so much influence and so much just authority with the Society which he had himself established, that much was left to his discretion, and very few laws and regulations were necessary for the purpose of preserving the harmony of this Society, and of supporting the Connexion. However, when he died, in the year 1791, that which had been foreseen took place. It became then necessary to lay down more precise laws, for the purpose of regulating the Connexion in future; and it is to the law passed in the year 1791, that I must first direct my attention; because it appears to me, that, upon the just construction of that law, much of the present case necessarily depends.

In the year 1791, then, after the death of Mr. Wesley, for the first time, Districts throughout the kingdom were established; and a provision was made to this effect, that the assistant of the Circuit shall have the power of convening together the preachers of the District, upon "any critical case which might occur;" that they should have the power of appointing a chairman, when so met; that their decision upon the matter before them should be final, until the next Conference; that the chairman should report the proceedings to the Conference; who, upon that report, should act as the Conference should think proper and just. That is the first law to which I think it necessary attention should be directed.

Nothing is said with respect to offences committed by preachers—nothing is said as to the trial of preachers; but still, taking the language, and the spirit, and the scope of this

law, and the nature of the Society, can it for a moment be doubted, that, if a preacher had so conducted himself,—I am not now alluding at all to the case of Dr. Warren,—but that, had a preacher so conducted himself, as to introduce discord, and to disturb the harmony of a Society like this, and endanger the Connexion, that would not be considered as a critical case, justifying the assistant in calling the meeting of the preachers? If so, and they had the power to decide, and their decision was to be final till the next Conference, is it not quite obvious, that it might, in many instances, be necessary, under such circumstances, for the purpose of preserving the very existence of such a Society, that the meeting should have the power of suspending or removing the preacher, subject always to the ratification or opinion of the Conference?

It appears to me, therefore, notwithstanding the generality of these terms, it embraces the very case in question; and that, if the law had stopped here, and no other act been passed, under this act of Conference, in the year 1791, any preacher who misconducted himself to such an extent, as to disturb the peace and harmony of the Society, would justify the assistant in calling a meeting, and that, when the meeting assembled, they would be justified, if they thought the case one of such description as to endanger the peace and harmony of the Society, to suspend or remove him till the next Conference. I consider this, therefore, as the basis of the law with respect to this subject.

In the year 1792, some alteration was made in this law; but not an alteration of any material consequence. As the law stood in the year 1791, the chairman was to be appointed, *pro hac vice*, by the District-committee, when assembled. An alteration in this respect was made, and a permanent chairman was directed to be appointed immediately after the Conference, who was to hold this situation till the next Conference. By the law of 1791, the meeting was to be convened by the assistant: by the law of 1792, the meeting was to be convened by the chairman. Nothing was said, in the law of 1791, as to the trial of preachers; but, in the law of 1792, something is said as to the trial of preachers, not giving express authority to try preachers; but assuming, as it were, that they had that authority, and pointing out some regulations with respect to the manner in which that authority should be exercised. One of those regulations was, and a very just and proper one, that an exact copy of the charges should be handed to the preacher, in order that he might prepare for his defence, when the meeting should be convened for the purpose of deciding on his case.

But there is another part of this law, to which it is necessary I should advert, for an object to which I shall by-and-by direct my attention. The chairman was to call the meeting: he might be the culprit,—he might be the party accused,—and, therefore, the superintendent, if there was any accusation against the chairman, was, in that case, directed to convene the meeting; and if the majority of the meeting were of opinion the case was made out against the party accused,—the chairman being described to be a travelling preacher,—in that case the District-committee had the power to suspend him. It has been reasoned, and very properly reasoned, that it would be extraordinary there should be a power given to suspend the chairman, and not power given to suspend any other preacher; and it is almost impossible that one could be led to that conclusion. But I have already said, that, under the general law, I understand there would be a power to suspend; and this is a confirmation of the opinion I have expressed on the construction of the general law.

There, therefore, the matter continued, till the end of the year 1792. In the year 1793 there is a provision of a different description, referring to a particular charge against preachers. If a preacher is charged with immorality, in that case, provision is made to try him by a species of domestic tribunal; two persons are to be appointed by the preacher; two by the accuser; those four persons, with the chairman, are to assemble; and they are to decide on his guilt or innocence of the offence which is imputed to him.

I find, by the rules of the year 1797, to which I refer now incidentally for this purpose, that it was not considered at that time that the decision of the tribunal was to be binding upon the preacher; for he might, if he thought proper, instead of submitting to the decision of this tribunal, insist on being tried by the District-committee.

This brings me down to the year 1793. In the year 1794, there was a different regula-

tion made, as to the trial of preachers who were accused of immorality. In that case, the leaders, the stewards, the trustees, and the preachers of the Circuit are to be assembled, and they are to decide upon his guilt or his innocence; and if a majority decide against him, in that case, the chairman of the District is to remove him. I don't think it necessary to dwell upon this particular law, because, when I come to look at the law of 1795, the regulations are so much at variance with the law of 1794, that I consider the law of 1795 was intended to be substituted in lieu of 1794; and I am confirmed in that conclusion, when I find, that in the code of rules which was published in the year 1797, this law is altogether omitted; and, although I don't know where to find it at the present moment, in consequence of the mass of affidavits before me, I have a strong impression on my mind that, in the affidavits, it is mentioned that it was considered as being abrogated, and as being no longer in force.

Now this has brought me down to the Act of Pacification. How, then, did the law stand, at the commencement of the year 1795? I think it is impossible to doubt for a moment, after the history which I have given of the progress of these laws, that, in the early part of the year 1795, and before the Act of Pacification was passed, the District-committee had the power to try; and, as the result of that power to try, to remove and to suspend, any travelling preacher; to remove and suspend him only till the next Conference. I think that deduction is clear, and absolutely certain and decisive.

If that be so, then the question that remains to be considered is this,—Has any alteration been made in this law, in this power, by the Act of Pacification; and, if so, what is the extent and nature of that alteration? The Act of Pacification was an Act which appears to have been very much considered. Disputes had taken place in this Society, principally founded on the administration of the sacrament; and for the purpose of terminating all those disputes, this Act of Pacification was agreed to by the Conference. Now, it is unnecessary that I should say anything as to the first part of the Act of Pacification, which relates to the administration of the Sacraments. I come, therefore, to the second title—the title *Discipline*. Now, what does that provide, and what is the law? It begins by saying, that no trustee shall expel or remove any preacher from the chapel. However, it says, that if the majority of the trustees, or if the majority of the leaders and stewards of the Society, have reason to think that any preacher has been guilty of the offence therein mentioned, namely, of immorality, or of erroneousness in doctrine, or of a violation of the rules therein before specified, with reference to the administration of the sacrament, or that he is deficient in talents, in abilities, that, under such circumstances—(not that they are compelled,—not that they are bound)—but that they shall have authority to convene a particular species of tribunal,—a mixed tribunal.—That tribunal is to consist of the preachers of the District, of the trustees, of the leaders, and of the stewards; they are to consider the case as alleged against the party accused; and, if a majority of them are of opinion that the case is made out against him, then he is *to be considered as removed*—as removed from that Circuit. It is then provided, that the District-committee shall fill up the vacancy so occasioned by the removed preacher from that Circuit, only until the next Conference—that the District-committee shall fill up the vacancy. And then it goes on further to provide, that the District-committee may, if they think proper, proceeding upon this act of the majority, suspend him from all duties until the next Conference.

This is the first part of the Articles of Pacification, as far as relates to discipline; and if it rested here, it appears to me there would be no ambiguity in the case. This is not at all at variance with the previous provisions. It does not take away the power of the District-committee: it only says, that in the case of certain delinquencies, or want of ability, certain persons have the power, if they think proper to exercise it, to call together a particular tribunal,—a mixed tribunal,—to consider the case. It does not interfere with the right of the District-committee, in all cases in which those particular parties having this particular authority do not choose to interfere, or in cases in which they have no authority to interfere. Therefore, if the case rested here, it appears to me there would be no doubt in the question.

But then the doubt which is brought into the question, is occasioned by particular words contained in the fifth division of this Act. The terms, as far as I recollect them, in

that fifth division, are these,—“That no preacher shall be removed from his Circuit, or suspended by any District-committee, except he have the privilege of the trial before mentioned.” Now these words, taken by themselves, are extremely large and general; and, I confess, I have felt some difficulty in dealing with them. Do they apply to take away all authority of suspending and removal from the District-committee? If they do, how can we apply to such a case all the terms that are contained in this fifth clause? No District-committee shall have the power of suspending or removing from the Circuit, except the party have the privilege of the trial before mentioned. But no District-committee has the power of giving the preacher the benefit of the trial before mentioned. There is no authority for that purpose. They have no power to convene this mixed tribunal. There are no regulations authorizing them to do so; and if it was meant that the District-committee should have had such a power, there is no doubt, I apprehend, it would have been distinctly provided for. It does not appear to me, therefore, that this applies to the general authority of the District-committee. But does it apply, and has it reference, solely to the powers given in the second head of this Article of Pacification? There is a difficulty even in construing it strictly with reference to this second head. If the word “*suspend*” only had been used, it would have been free from ambiguity. “No preacher shall be suspended by the District-committee except he shall have the privilege of the trial before mentioned,” might have had reference to what had gone before, because they had, in terms, the power to suspend the preacher in consequence of the decision of the mixed tribunal; but then it goes on to say, “No District-committee shall have the power of *removing* from the *Circuit* the preacher, unless he has the benefit of the trial before mentioned.” But the District-committee is not the body that removes him; he is removed, not by the District-committee, but the act of the majority. But then it is impossible not to take notice of the turn of expression here used,—“He shall be *considered as removed*.” It don’t say he is actually, and in fact, removed, but that he shall be *considered as removed*. And then that is followed up immediately by saying, the District-committee would appoint his successor. It would seem, therefore, as if it was considered, that the act of the District-committee was necessary to consummate, as it were, the act of removal. Giving it that interpretation, and supposing that to be the intention of the parties who were engaged in framing this law, then the whole is consistent; and it amounts to nothing more than this, that the District-committee shall not give effect to the proceedings herein-before-mentioned, against any preacher, unless he has had the privilege of the trial which is above-mentioned,—that is provided for him.

I do not mean to say, there is not some difficulty in this case; but, as I said during the argument, and as I have felt throughout, there are difficulties both ways. The construction is doubtful; and if the construction be doubtful, then let us advert to the circumstances which have taken place since the law was passed. What took place in the year 1797? The question to be considered, it is always to be recollected, is this,—Was the authority of the District-committee to suspend, and to remove from the Circuit, taken away by the Act of Pacification? Bear that always in mind, and see what has taken place.

In the year 1797, two years afterwards, another act of Conference was published; and in that act of Conference there is this provision. By that act of Conference, the District-committee has, with respect to different items, with respect to different acts, only a negative power. Much of the authority of the District-committee was taken away; and then it goes on thus: “In short, brethren, out of our great love for peace and union, and our great desire to satisfy your minds, we have given up to you by far the greatest part of the superintendent’s authority; and if we consider that the Quarterly-meetings are the sources from whence all temporary regulations, during the intervals of the Conference, must have originally sprung; and also that the committee formed according to the plan of Pacification, can, in every instance in which the trustees, leaders, and stewards, choose”—choose “to interfere”—choose to *interfere*—“respecting the gifts, doctrines, or moral character of preachers, supersede, in a great measure, the regular District-committee, we may, taking all these things into our view, truly say, that such have been the sacrifices we have made, that our District-committees themselves have hardly any authority remaining,

but a bare negative in general, and the appointment of a representative to assist in drawing up the rough draft of the stations of the preachers." The authority, therefore, of the District-committee was superseded—when? Not absolutely, but only in those cases, in which the trustees, leaders, and stewards, *choose* to interfere, respecting particular objects, namely, the gifts, doctrines, or the moral character of the preachers. It appears to me, therefore, impossible to consider, taking this article of 1797 in connexion with the article of 1795, that the Articles of Pacification were meant to have the effect which is contended for on the part of the plaintiff.

But the case does not at all rest here: the case is much stronger. In the year 1797 it was considered by the Conference, who are the legislative body, that it was of importance to the Connexion, and for the purpose of promoting harmony, and for the purpose of pointing out the line of duty which individuals should pursue,—that it was of importance to publish the existing rules of the Society. In the preamble to this, it says, "And whereas we have collected together those rules which we believe to be essential to the existence of Methodism, as well as others, to which we have no objection,—we do now voluntarily, and in good faith, sign our names, as approving of and engaging to comply with the aforesaid collection of rules, or code of laws, God being our helper." So that they publish what they consider to be the code of laws of Methodism, in the year 1797, and they sign that code with their names. Now, that code has been given in evidence. It is the document, I think, described by the letter "F,"—the exhibit "F." Do we find that that code of laws begins with the Act of Pacification? By no means. Those laws and rules to which I have referred for the trial of a preacher by the District-committees, those form a part of that code. They precede the Act of Pacification. They are obviously considered, therefore, as in force at the time when this Act was passed, namely, in the year 1797. The mode of trial of a preacher, by a District-committee, is pointed out. But it may be said, and has been said, that though the District-committee may have a power of trial, they have no power of removing or suspending;—the Act of Pacification, in that clause to which I have referred, takes away that power. Did it so? Why, in the code of laws, that provision for suspending the chairman of the meeting still remains; and it is perfectly clear, therefore, that the party publishing this code of laws never considered that that clause in the Act of Pacification could have the meaning that is now assigned to it, namely, that of taking away from the District-committee the power of suspending in any case when the party had not the privilege of the particular trial mentioned in the Act of Pacification.

It appears to me, that this is demonstrative upon this. Who are the parties promulgating these laws? Not parties who had slight information; not persons who had only a slight knowledge of the constitution of the Connexion; why, it was the legislators themselves,—it was the very parties who promulgated the Act of Pacification;—it was they who promulgated this law, and who, by that very act of their own promulgation, made it become of itself a legislative act; and it is a declaration, by the legislature, that the power of suspension still continues in the District-committee.

But that is not all. I should advert here, however, to a document which was put in on the other side, and much insisted upon; which is handed, as I understand, and I believe that appears in the affidavits, to each preacher at the time of his ordination; and which document is accompanied with this declaration, that "as long as you conform and adhere to those rules, we shall receive you as our fellow-labourer in the ministry." That contains the Act of Pacification; that contains the Act of the year 1797; but it takes no notice of the preceding Acts: and it is said, therefore, that that document is to be put in opposition to the code of laws published in the year 1797, and is to be considered *pro tanto* as an abrogation of them. But I consider this as nothing more than as a guide to the conduct of the preacher. It is not intended as a perfect code of laws, for this obvious reason, that the regulations as to the District-committee are entirely excluded from it, not merely for the purpose of trial, but for all other purposes. It is quite obvious on the face of that document itself, it was not intended as a transcript of the code of laws, as then existing, but as a mere guide and assistant to the preacher. It appears to me, therefore, that that document, which is dated as late as the year 1830, cannot have the effect which it

was said it was intended to have, of abrogating and annulling the code published in the year 1797.

But now, then, as to what has taken place since the year 1795. From the year 1795, down to the present time, a great variety of instances, at least seventy in number, have taken place;—seventy instances, at least, of preachers suspended or removed by the District-committee. It is said, that if a law is clear, usage at variance with that law cannot alter the law. But I don't consider, taking the law by itself, for the reasons I have stated, that it is perfectly clear. Standing by itself, it is not perfectly clear. But this is to be considered, with respect to the usage, that it is not the ordinary usage of ordinary persons, acting under a code of laws, but that it is the usage of the very legislative body itself, acting under and interpreting its own laws. Now mark—a preacher is suspended by a District-committee; what is the course that is immediately taken? He is suspended only till the next Conference. The committee is bound to report to the Conference; and in the Minutes of Conference those reports are regularly entered. Is it possible to suppose, that if, in 1796 or 1797, immediately after the passing of the Articles of Pacification, the District-committee had removed or suspended a preacher, when they made their report to the Conference, would they not have immediately said, (if that was not the meaning of the law,) "You have acted illegally; you have acted, it may be, with good intentions; but you have acted contrary to our law for promoting the harmony of the Society, as promulgated by us in 1795?" But no such thing takes place. The report of the District-committee is entered by the Conference, without comment, and so it goes on from the year 1795 down to the present time.

But then, it is said, there was an exception. It is said there was no resistance to those cases, because it is very likely the parties themselves, in many instances, would not be disposed to resist, for the reason fairly stated in the affidavit. They might be conscious of their guilt, and if so, they would be desirous that the matter should not be further investigated. But the Conference itself would have been called upon to act, whether the parties had intervened or not; the legislative body would have been bound to act, and would have been of necessity called upon to have considered and declared that to be a violation of the rules.—But then, it is said, "Mr. Henry Moore's case is an exception. Of what importance are those seventy cases that have been acted upon and acquiesced in?—Mr. Henry Moore resisted, and in Mr. Henry Moore's resistance he triumphed in his opposition to the District-committee."—Now, really, what are the facts of Mr. Henry Moore's case? Mr. Henry Moore took the chapel under particular circumstances; he took it under an express provision, as I understand, in the will of Mr. Wesley. The Conference had allotted that house to the superintendent. Mr. Henry Moore, conceiving that he had a right to the house, in defiance of the Conference, refused to give up possession. What did the District-committee do? They assembled, summoned him, and suspended him from his Circuit. Mr. Henry Moore resisted; but what was the limit of his resistance? He did not attempt to preach in the other chapels in the Circuit, but confined his preaching to that particular chapel, and his resistance to that particular house, on the ground which I have stated. He said, "You have no jurisdiction over this particular chapel; I hold it by a particular title; I hold it under the will of Mr. Wesley:"—but he abandoned his title to all the other chapels; he did not preach there. This matter afterwards came before the Conference; but, from Mr. Moore's high character, and the respect that was entertained for him, the matter went no further, but was suffered to drop. And really it appears to me, that as to Mr. Henry Moore's case being an exception, his abstaining from preaching in the other chapels, and the discharge of his duties there, is rather a confirmation of it; and that his holding this particular chapel, on particular grounds, shows that he thought he had no right to oppose the general authority of the District-committee, but only that they had no right to disturb him with respect to this particular chapel, on account of the disposition by the will.

It does appear to me, therefore, that the case is very strong, and very clear, with respect to the power of the District-committee, and that the District-committee still, notwithstanding the Act of Pacification, have a right—have authority, to suspend or to remove a preacher

in all cases, except in those particular cases mentioned in the Act of Pacification; where the trustees and the other parties therein mentioned choose to interfere. I think, in all other cases, they have authority to suspend or to remove.

Having established that as a preliminary, the next point appears to be very short:—Have they acted regularly, and discharged their duty in acting according to the rules of the Society, in the course they have taken? The only rules that appear prescribed in the Act of Pacification are, the giving notice, and the form of summoning the meeting. A copy of the charges were handed to Dr. Warren; he had intimation of the day of meeting; and he attended accordingly. So far, all the proceedings were regular. Dr. Warren afterwards withdrew and refused to attend his trial. They suspended him; not because they found him guilty of the charge that had been preferred against him, but they suspended him because he refused to undergo the trial. He said, "I will not attend." They gave him notice: he would not attend; and if I may make use of the expression with reference to proceedings of this kind, they suspended him for contumacy,—that is the fact. Had they power to do so? Why, I refer them back to that which I consider to be the foundation of the whole of this authority, namely, the law of 1791. In a case of emergency, the District-committee may meet,—they may consider that case of emergency. It is not for us to say whether it was a case of emergency or not; it is for that particular tribunal the District-committee, to say whether it was a case of emergency or not. They did meet; they considered it was a case of emergency; and they had a power to decide according to their own discretion; and their decision is final until the next Conference. What did they decide? They decided, that because he did not choose to attend the investigation of the case, he should be suspended. I think that comes clearly within the scope and meaning of the article of 1791, as coupled with the law of 1792, and that they had power to do what they did.

It is said that Dr. Warren was harshly treated, in not allowing Mr. Bromley (I think his name was) to attend with him at that meeting. With that I have really nothing to do. The District-committee had a power to regulate their own proceedings. They had a power to do so, and upon whether it was duly exercised or not, I wish to give no opinion. Upon whether it was a discreet exercise of the power, I also give no opinion; but they did exercise that power that no stranger should be present. They have authority to do that, and that does not, therefore, render the proceedings illegal or invalid. It is again said, that the publication by Dr. Warren of his speech that he delivered in the Conference, with the observations affixed to it, was in reality not an offence; not an offence entitling this body to exercise the jurisdiction, and that it did not support the charges that were preferred against him, copies of which were handed to me. The evidence did not appear to have been gone into. I presume that was because he was absent, and did not attend. Whether it did support those charges, or not, was a question for the District-meeting. I have no jurisdiction with respect to it. A particular tribunal is established by the agreement of those parties to decide a question of this kind; I have therefore no authority to say, whether, within the meaning of the rules of this Society, this pamphlet was or was not an offence; that was peculiarly for the decision of the District-committee.

I therefore am of opinion not only that the District-committee had the power to suspend, but I am of opinion that they acted legally. I am not called upon to say more. Whether they acted wisely, discreetly, temperately, or harshly, these are matters with which I have no concern, and upon which I desire now to express no opinion. Therefore, upon these two grounds merely, the regularity of the proceedings, and being satisfied of the authority of the body, I am bound to affirm the decision in this respect of the vice-chancellor.

I must again, before concluding, express my great regret at the existence of the dissensions which have given rise to these proceedings; and from what I have heard, and from what I may say I know of the character of Dr. Warren, of his learning, of his piety, of his talents, and of his good conduct, which have been stated on one side, and not even attempted to be contradicted on the other,—taking all these things into consideration, I must express my regret that he should be the sufferer—sufferer, I say, arising out of a contest which had originated as it appears in the establishment of a particular body, which

this Society, or a part of this Society, thought it right to establish. I express my regret that he should have been the sufferer, I will not say the victim, but the sufferer in those proceedings.

The judgment, therefore, of his honour the vice-chancellor must be affirmed.

M, page 279.—*Resolutions of the Grand Central Association.*

GENERAL PRINCIPLE.

Resolved,—That the basis of a plan for a reformation of the existing abuses in Methodism shall be the principle of the right of interference, on the part of the members of the Church, in the regulation of all its affairs.

PROPOSITION I.

That Leaders'-meetings be composed, as usual of the stewards and leaders of each separate Society; Local Preachers'-meetings, of all the local preachers of the Circuit; Quarterly-meetings, of the stewards, leaders, local preachers, and trustees of the Circuit; the itinerant preachers having a voice in all such meetings, and the superintendent preacher being *ex officio* president of the same; but should any superintendent refuse to put to the vote any resolutions, regularly proposed, then the meeting shall have the authority to appoint another person to be, for that time, the chairman of the meeting.

PROPOSITION II.

That Leaders'-meetings have authority to transact all business connected with the Societies to which they belong; Local Preachers'-meetings to manage, as usual, all matters relating immediately to the work and office of local preachers; and Quarterly-meetings to have the control of all the affairs of the Circuit.

PROPOSITION III.

That all our rules be based upon the principle that we exist as a Connexion for purposes purely religious; that they be published for the information of the whole Body, their meaning being first unequivocally defined; and that no rule or regulation be considered binding upon the Connexion until it has received the approbation of a majority of the Societies, through the medium of their respective Quarterly-meetings.

PROPOSITION IV.

That the discipline of each Circuit be administered by its own local authorities; an appeal lying from the Leaders' and Local Preachers'-meetings to the Quarterly-meetings, whose decision, without the interference of either District-meeting or Conference, shall be final.

PROPOSITION V.

That unrestricted discussion on all subjects affecting the interests of the Body be allowed in all our official meetings, every question being decided by the majority.

PROPOSITION VI.

That the members of Society by means of the leaders, in conjunction with the other officers of the Circuit, be represented in all District-meetings, and in Conference, according to some equitable plan of lay delegation, to be adjusted between the preachers and the delegates at the approaching Conference to be held in Sheffield.*

PROPOSITION VII.

That the management of the financial affairs of the Connexion be placed exclusively in the hands of laymen, so as to disencumber the ministerial office from the burthen of secular matters.

* It may be interesting, at any rate it is some indication of the feeling which prevails in the country in reference to the principle of lay delegation in Conference, to observe, that on passing this resolution, out of ninety-four present only nine voted against it.

PROPOSITION VIII.

That as there are many members of Society sincerely attached to Methodism, who most decidedly object to the establishment of the Theological Institution, and who, from the opinions they entertain thereon, conceive that the character of our ministry will thereby be injuriously altered, and the pecuniary resources of the Connexion diminished, and as it is obvious from the past prosperity of Methodism, without such an Institution, that it is not indispensable, therefore the Conference should consent, rather than hazard a division of the Connexion, to give up the Theological Institution forthwith.

PROPOSITION IX.

That Dr. Warren, and the various officers and members who have been suspended or expelled for their conscientious opposition to the Theological Institution, or have left the Connexion in consequence of the unjust and unconstitutional treatment they, or their brethren, have received since the Conference of 1827, be reinstated in the respective situations which they had previously occupied.

N, page 236.—*The Case of Dr. Warren.*

THE Minutes of the special Meetings of the Manchester District-committee on Dr. Warren's case having been read, and Dr. Warren having stated that he appeared in the Conference for the purpose of appealing against the decision of the District-committee, the president inquired of the chairman of the District, and of the late president, whether any previous notice of such appeal had been received from Dr. Warren. It distinctly appeared, and was fully admitted by Dr. Warren, that no such notice, nor any intimation whatever to that effect, had ever been given by Dr. Warren, or by any person on his behalf.

It was then stated, on behalf of the District-committee, that they had, in justice, and according to established Methodistical usage, a *right* to object, *if they were so disposed*, to Dr. Warren's appeal being heard, in the present stage of the business, on the following grounds:—

1. That the *Notice* of appeal, usual and fitting in all such cases, has never been given.
2. That Dr. Warren has forfeited the right of *now* making his appeal to the Conference, by having previously appealed, in violation of an established rule of our Body, and the injunction of the New Testament, to a *civil* jurisdiction, instead of appealing first to the Conference, according to our rules, and awaiting the result of their determination on his case, before he appealed elsewhere; as well as by connecting himself with a certain *Association*, formed and conducted in utter violation of the laws and of the peace of our Connexion, and, in conjunction with that Association, appealing to public meetings, for the express purpose of agitating our Societies,—this being done, as he himself substantially admits, with the view of *enforcing* on the Conference, when it should assemble, by the pressure of an external influence, a decision favourable to his views.
3. That Dr. Warren has also forfeited the right of appeal, by those calumnious, divisive, and mischievous proceedings, in various parts of the kingdom, during the last eight or nine months, which are now matters of public notoriety, and which were altogether inconsistent with his duty, if he really considered himself as still a Methodist preacher, retaining the wish or intention to claim, by an appeal to the Conference or otherwise, any of the rights and privileges connected with a ministerial relation to our Body.

These grounds for maintaining the opinion that Dr. Warren has forfeited the *right* of appeal were stated by the president to Dr. Warren, and he was heard in reply.

The Conference resolves, on this part of the case,—

That, on the three grounds above-mentioned, Dr. Warren has, in the judgment of the Conference, clearly and entirely forfeited the *right* of appeal, in the present stage of these proceedings; but that under all the circumstances, as a matter, not of right or justice, but of indulgence, the objections shall in this case be waived; and the Conference will hear both the District-committee, and the other parties who may think themselves aggrieved by Dr. Warren's proceedings, on the one hand,—and Dr. Warren himself, or any member of the

Conference favourable to his views, on the other hand,—in reference to the whole of these unhappy transactions, up to the present period: all merely technical and formal objections being dismissed on both sides, and regard being had entirely to the substantial merits of the case; but that the deviation, in this instance, from our ordinary rules and requirements, though consented to by the District-committee, is considered by the Conference as being made solely in the way of indulgence, on a peculiar occasion, and shall not, on any account, be drawn into a precedent.

In conformity with the preceding decision, the Conference then entered on the careful consideration of Dr. Warren's appeal, and of the transactions on both sides, from the commencement of the proceedings of the District-committee, up to the present period.

The official statement of the Manchester District-committee, containing their views and resolutions on the various parts of Dr. Warren's case, was read to the Conference. He was then heard at great length in his own defence; and, at his request, Mr. Bromley also was heard on his behalf. After some of the members of the Manchester District-committee had spoken on points referred to in the defence, and after several questions, calculated to elicit more fully the facts of the case, had been proposed by other members of the Conference, and Dr. Warren had been allowed full opportunity to answer and explain accordingly, he was told that, if he had any further remarks to offer, the Conference were ready to hear him. He declined, however, to say more on the subject.

On the whole of this painful case the Conference resolves as follows:—

I. That the District-committee, at their special meetings on this case, have not exceeded nor misapplied that right of jurisdiction, according to the laws and usages of the Connexion, which two decisions in the Courts of Equity have recognised; but that their proceedings were proper and regular, and required by the circumstances of the case: For,

1. Had the District-committee omitted to call Dr. Warren to account, they would have been guilty of a dereliction of duty, because—

The New Testament, which we regard as our supreme and permanent law, enjoins that we watch over each other, and exercise mutual vigilant inspection and control; and because—

It is indispensably necessary to the purity of our ministry, and to the spiritual welfare of our Societies, to retain, and on all proper occasions to use, that right of fully inquiring into the conduct of its own members, and judicially dealing with them, which the Conference, in its annual assemblies, and (during the periods intervening between its yearly meetings) by means of its District-committees, has hitherto exercised: And,—

2. The grounds on which Dr. Warren refused to continue on his trial, before the District-committee specially assembled for the purpose, were, in the judgment of the Conference, insufficient and untenable; and, for so refusing, the District-committee were in duty bound to suspend his functions as an accredited minister of our Connexion; because—

To allow or connive at such contumacy is incompatible with the nature and principles of society in general, and with the constitution and discipline of our Connexion in particular; for if, on any occasion, or under any pretext, a preacher were permitted to refuse trial, and thus to elude investigation, and to evade that reproof, admonition, and brotherly control which a District-committee should deem it right to administer, our people could have no security for the purity of our ministry, either as to doctrine or practice.

The decision of the District-committee, suspending the ministerial functions of Dr. Warren, until he should submit to take his trial, is therefore approved and confirmed by the Conference.

II. That in the judgment of the Conference the following facts have been fully proved:—

1. That, by various publications and speeches, Dr. Warren has most unjustly and inexcusably defamed and slandered the character of many preachers and official members of the Connexion individually, and of the Manchester District-committee and the Conference collectively.

2. That he has committed numerous flagrant offences against the essential principles of our connexional union, by overt acts directly tending to subvert the constitution, and to destroy the purity, the peace, and, eventually, even the existence of our united Societies; especially,—

By having concurred in organizing an association, or combination, opposed to the disci-

pline of our Societies, and united for the avowed purpose of effecting great and subversive changes in our general system :—

By joining with others, in the same combination, to establish separate assemblies and places of worship ; and by arranging and publishing a plan for religious services in those separate places of worship, in direct and contemptuous opposition to the lawful authority which had placed him under suspension :—

By co-operating with the combination aforesaid, in convening and addressing mixed assemblages, for the purpose of destroying all confidence in the Conference, and disturbing and dividing our Societies :—

By uniting and assisting, in particular, at a late meeting of persons calling themselves “ delegates ;” at which meeting resolutions and propositions opposed to the essential principles of the Connexion were adopted, and measures of disturbance and division were concerted ; and—

By continuing, notwithstanding the decisions of the vice-chancellor and the lord chancellor, to resist and in various ways seeking to overturn, the discipline of the Connexion.

3. That, in numerous instances, his conduct and proceedings are gross and palpable violations of what the Conference considers to be the plain principles and precepts of the New Testament.

III. That on these and other similar grounds, and because Dr. Warren, far from having manifested any contrition for his many offences, or expressed any intention or disposition to abandon the evil courses which he has so injuriously pursued, has on the contrary plainly avowed his determination to persist in the views and purposes expressed by him in a certain published letter, and in a note to the fourth edition of one of his pamphlets, and has in various ways declared to the Conference that it could not retain his services without consenting to make such alterations in our long-established constitution and discipline, as the Conference deems to be great and essential ;—the Conference unanimously judges and resolves that it cannot, with Christian propriety and fidelity, allow Dr. Warren to have a place as a preacher in our Connexion. He is therefore hereby accordingly expelled.

O, page 305.—*Declaration of Laymen.*

Sheffield, July 24th, 1835.

WE, the undersigned officers and members of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society, having been convened by the president of the Conference for the purpose of conferring with him, in a free and friendly conversation, upon various subjects affecting the general interests of the Connexion at the present season, embrace the opportunity of expressing our sentiments on the following subjects :—

I. We deeply deplore the measures which have been adopted for the avowed purpose of agitating the various Societies forming our Connexion,—measures by which the work of God has been seriously interrupted, and the character of the Body greatly injured ; and we declare our conviction, that the aspersions which have been cast upon the Conference in general, and upon several of its most influential and distinguished members in particular, are false and calumnious.

II. We state it as our deliberate and conscientious opinion, that it is the imperative duty of the Connexion, faithfully and steadfastly to adhere to the great and long-established principles of original Methodism, and more particularly to those which prevent the introduction of lay delegates into the Methodist Conference,—which secure our connexional union,—which provide for the due exercise of the scriptural powers of the pastoral office,—and which guarantee the purity and efficiency of the Christian ministry, by confiding to the Conference the care of its own members.

III. We most cheerfully and entirely confide in the wisdom, integrity, and liberality of the Conference, in reference to such a modification or explanation of some of the rules of the Body as the Conference may consider best adapted to meet the present and future circumstances of the Connexion, and to carry out into more effectual and extensive operation those tried principles of Wesleyan Methodism, every departure from which we most sincerely deprecate.

P, page 310.—*Special Address of the Conference to the Societies.*

DEARLY BELOVED BRETHREN.

IN the conclusion of a communication dated "Wesleyan Conference, Sheffield, August 7th, 1835," and which has already been largely circulated among you, it was intimated that further information, on the subjects to which that communication referred, would be given in the Annual Pastoral Address of the Conference, to be prepared as usual at the close of their sittings. It has, however, been found more convenient that such information should be presented to you, distinctly and separately, in the form of a Special Address to our Societies. This is the design of the present document, respecting which it is deemed necessary here to recite the following Resolution, unanimously adopted by the Conference; (see "Minutes" of 1835, page 550;) viz.,—

Q. XXIV. What explanations and improvements shall we adopt in reference to the existing rules and usages of our Connexion?

A. 1. With respect to the essential principles and fundamental regulations of our established discipline, we are unanimously and deliberately resolved, in the fear of God, and on the most conscientious conviction of duty, to make no change whatever; but to "walk by the same rule and mind the same thing." Our views on this subject are recorded in a document entitled, "The Answer of the Conference to an Address," &c., dated Sheffield, August 6th, 1835, and largely circulated among our Societies at an early period of this Conference. That document contains our final decision on this point; and we direct that it shall be officially printed in connexion with the Minutes of the present year.

2. In accordance, however, with the pledge given in article V. of the said "Answer to an Address," the Conference has proceeded to take into its most affectionate and careful consideration, as far as time could be found for such a task, when the indispensable business of its session had been transacted, some of the most material of those subjects of discipline which have of late excited the attention of the Connexion. The result of these deliberations on the several topics of Financial Affairs, Expulsion of Members, Meetings for Communicating with the Conference by Memorial, and Proposed Revision of our Rules in general, has been embodied in a "Special Address to the Wesleyan-Methodist Societies," which, as well as the usual Pastoral Address, shall be appended to the present Minutes, as an official document, fully recognised by the Conference as its unanimous act and deed, and signed as such by the president and secretary. Most earnestly do the Conference hope and pray that the explanations and improvements which it details, may be found satisfactory to the real friends of the Connexion, and received by the Societies at large in the same spirit of cordial affection, and earnest desire for the preservation of Christian peace and unity, in which they have been prepared and adopted on the part of the Conference. They are now solemnly commended to the calm and kindly attention of our beloved people, and, above all, to the blessing of God.

Without further preface, the Conference now proceed to lay before you the result of their long and anxious deliberations on the several topics enumerated in the Resolution just quoted.

I. FINANCIAL AFFAIRS.

1. THE Conference has long felt it to be both just and expedient, and to themselves (as a body of Christian ministers) exceedingly agreeable, that the active management of the financial affairs of the Connexion, whether local or general, should be undertaken, as far as possible, by laymen of established character for integrity, Christian principle, and steadfast attachment to the interests of Methodism; accustomed to the transaction of similar business; able to command sufficient leisure for such "labours of love" as are needed in this department of the "work of the Lord;" and willing to consecrate that leisure to the service of our common cause. The Conference heartily concurs in the principle, that those of our public funds which are wholly or chiefly supported by the contributions of our people at large, (although these contributions, as it is well known, are principally obtained by the public exertions and private applications of the preachers themselves,) should be expended, under the general direction of the Conference, by committees, composed not of preachers

only, but of preachers and laymen conjointly. In our very peculiar system of itinerancy, and connexional union, the assistance of the preachers in such committees will always be found indispensable to the good practical working of the several funds; because they obviously possess a more intimate and personal acquaintance with the circumstances and necessities of our work, in its varied relations and mutual bearings, and in its now widely-extended field of operation, than local men, however able and devoted, can possibly acquire. And it would not be equitable or reasonable to demand that those whose influence and activity are mainly relied upon for procuring pecuniary support to our institutions, and whose individual and ministerial character is therefore pledged to the public for the right application of the funds which they are employed to advocate and maintain, should be systematically excluded from the committees to which those funds are confided. On the other hand, it is equally just and advantageous that the body of contributors should have, in the respectable lay members united with the preachers in the committees, a sufficient security for the proper and careful expenditure of the public money. By the plan of mixed committees both these objects are accomplished; and all parties, who, either by personal service or pecuniary benevolence, have a share in the work of contribution, are enabled to exercise a fair and salutary influence in the subsequent work of distribution.

2. These views and principles are not new in the Wesleyan-Methodist Connexion. They have been for many years in extensive operation among us. The shameless assertions of some modern adversaries of our Body, that our people have little or no share, according to our existing economy, in the management of their financial concerns, and that the preachers are desirous to have in their own hands either the exclusive control, or the onerous and active management, of the public funds of the Body, is a calumny which the Conference are bold to meet with a positive and justly indignant denial. Most gladly would they be exempted, if a sufficient number of other persons of adequate leisure and influence could be found to undertake the task, from much of that labour, even in soliciting pecuniary support for our work, to which the necessity of the case, and their love for the cause of God, alone induce them now to submit.

It is matter of notoriety, that all the local contributions of our Societies and friends, constituting by far the largest portion of the whole financial concerns of the Connexion, are now, and have been for a long series of years, regularly paid into the hands of the Society stewards and Circuit stewards annually appointed for this purpose, and expended by them or under their entire superintendence and direction, according to our established usages and rules. A report of their management in these matters is constantly made by the stewards to the Quarterly-meetings of their respective Circuits.

As to the contributions to those public funds, by which our various institutions for the general purposes of the Connexion, or for objects of piety and benevolence, are supported, they are, in like manner, generally expended under the superintendence of mixed committees, constituted on the principles above stated. Every security which can be reasonably desired in a religious community like ours is thus afforded, that the moneys liberally contributed shall be honestly expended in effecting the great purposes for which they are solicited and designed. This has long been the established practice with respect to the Missionary Fund and the General Chapel Fund. Last year the Conference spontaneously applied the same principle to the School Fund; and they are now not merely willing, but anxious, that it should be fully extended also to the only two remaining funds which are at all materially or generally aided by the contributions of our people; namely, the Contingent Fund, and the Preachers' Auxiliary Fund.

3. With respect to the Contingent Fund, which derives its means of usefulness principally from what are termed the Yearly Collection in the Classes, and the July or Home Missionary Collection in our congregations, and to which the Conference affords considerable aid by a voluntary donation from the profits of our book-room,—the largest part of its annual income, by much, is employed in supplying the deficiencies of the poorer and smaller Circuits in Great Britain and Ireland, and especially those of new and infant stations, unable as yet to meet fully their own local expenses. These, which are called the Ordinary Deficiencies, are regularly examined and adjusted, for the current year, at the Financial District-meetings in

September, and the subsequent annual District-meetings in May; when two Circuit stewards from each Circuit in the District are earnestly requested to attend, and have an equal right with the preachers to speak and vote on every financial question. The whole grant made from the Contingent Fund to that District is divided among the several claimant Circuits in their presence, and with their assistance and concurrence. Thus, by far the greatest portion even of the Contingent Fund is already placed under an efficient control, by means of a mixed meeting. It only remains to apply the same principle to the distribution of that part of the same Fund which is expended on what are called the Extraordinary Deficiencies of the year; including grants for "Travelling Expenses," "Afflictions," "Furniture" for Preachers' Houses, and "Miscellaneous Expenses" of various kinds, especially those connected with the executive department of our general work as directed by the Conference, and the due administration of our discipline. These "Extraordinaries" have hitherto, for the sake of convenience, been settled at the time of the Annual Conference, in a meeting of the Chairmen of the several Districts. But the Conference now resolves as follows; viz. :—

(1.) That the entire portion of the business of the Contingent Fund, which cannot be finally settled by the Preachers and Stewards in the Local District-meetings, shall henceforth be confided to a mixed-committee, who shall meet in the week before the annual assembly of the Conference, and be called "The Committee of the Contingent Fund," consisting of the president and secretary of the Conference, and of thirty other members, viz., fifteen preachers, to be annually appointed by the Conference, and fifteen laymen, to be annually chosen from the Districts which are most contiguous to the place where the Conference is to be held, or from which it is likely that laymen of suitable leisure and information may be induced to attend the ensuing Conference. The appointment of these lay members shall rest exclusively with the Circuit stewards of those Districts which shall be specified in the Minutes of the Conference from year to year, as most conveniently situated for this purpose; and shall take place at the time of their assembly in the May District-meetings, as soon as they shall have finished the business connected with the Ordinary Deficiencies of their respective Districts.

(2.) That two treasurers and two secretaries of the Contingent Fund shall be annually appointed, who shall be *ex officio* members of the committee. One of the treasurers shall in future be a lay member of the Society.

(3.) That the same committee, or such members of it as can conveniently be present, shall be the Committee of Distribution, who shall meet at the close of each Conference, or as soon as the stations of the preachers shall have been finally settled, for the purpose of allotting to each District its fair and necessary share, according to its means and probable expenditure, of the gross sum which they may deem it proper to devote, out of the estimated income of the ensuing year, to the payment of "Ordinary Deficiencies" in the Circuits. At this final meeting they shall also complete the settlement of the "Extraordinaries" for the past year, by examining those items of Miscellaneous Expenditure, belonging to that department, the exact amount of which could not be ascertained at an earlier period, because they necessarily depend upon various executive arrangements which can be determined only during the course of the proceedings of each successive Conference.

(4.) That to the said mixed committee of the Contingent Fund shall likewise be confided, at their meetings in the week before the Conference, the duty of examining and regulating the affairs of the Children's Fund; for which purpose the two treasurers of that Fund, (one of whom shall, as now, be always a lay member of the Society,) and also its secretary, when he can conveniently attend the Conference, shall be *ex officio* members of the committee of the Contingent Fund.

(5.) That the chairman and the financial secretary of each District shall be desired to attend the meetings of the committee of the Contingent Fund, during the time at which the applications from that District shall be under consideration, in order to state in person the cases which they have to recommend, as agreed upon at their respective District-meetings in May, and to make the Committee fully acquainted with the circumstances of every claimant Circuit or individual.

4. In reference to the Preachers' Auxiliary Fund, the Conference resolves as follows; viz. :—

(1.) That the annual distribution of the sums contributed by our friends to this Fund shall in future be intrusted to a committee, consisting of the president and secretary of the Conference, with eleven preachers and eleven laymen, to be appointed from year to year by the Conference; such distribution being conducted according to the general plans and regulations hitherto adopted, and on the principles of a becoming tenderness and respectful feeling towards the aged preachers, or widows or orphan children of deceased preachers, who may apply for assistance; as well as with a sacred regard to the confidential character of any communications made by them, or on their behalf, in reference to their private affairs and necessities.

(2.) That two treasurers, one preacher and one laymen, and also a secretary, shall be appointed at each Conference, who shall be *ex officio* members of the committee.

(3.) The treasurer for the time being of the Seniors' Fund, which is partially assisted by an annual grant from the Auxiliary Fund, shall also be *ex officio* a member of the committee of that Fund; in order that he may give such information as may be deemed necessary or advantageous.

II. EXPULSION OF MEMBERS.

1. DURING the life of Mr. Wesley, and for a short period afterwards, the superintendent (formerly called "the assistant") possessed, according to the primitive rules and established usage of the Connexion, the entire and unrestricted power of excluding from the Society any members whom, on account of their habitual and persevering violation of the laws of God, or of any of our general rules, he judged to be improper for our Christian communion. This power was subject only, in the case of an appeal, to the paternal interference of Mr. Wesley, while he lived, and, after his death, to that of the District-committees and of the Conference. (See the 7th head of the General Rules, dated May 1, 1743.)

2. It was subsequently agreed, in 1794, (see Minutes, vol. i., p. 299,) to regulate and limit the power of the superintendent, by a formal engagement then made on the part of the Conference, that the preachers should "consult the stewards and leaders" before they proceeded to any act of expulsion; the admission and expulsion of members being, however, at the same time, explicitly recognised as among those "spiritual concerns of the Society," which, in contradistinction to "temporal concerns," had "ever" been, and should continue to be, "managed by the preachers." This legal provision for "consultation" applied to members generally. But a distinct and special provision was made, in the same year, in reference to trustees; viz., "No trustee (however accused, or defective in conforming to the established rules of the Society) shall be removed from the Society unless his crime or breach of the rules of the Society be proved in the presence of the trustees and leaders."

3. At length, in 1797, (see Minutes, vol. i., p. 375,) instead of this simple "consultation of the stewards and leaders, it was enacted, that no person should be expelled for immorality till such immorality had been "proved at a Leaders'-meeting;" or, as this clause appears to have been afterwards explained, "proved to the satisfaction" of the Leaders'-meeting. And the intention of this new enactment is officially recorded to have been, to deliver the members of our Societies from every apprehension of clandestine expulsions. "That superintendent," it is stated, "would be bold indeed, who would act with partiality or injustice in the presence of the whole meeting of leaders. Such a superintendent, we trust, we have not among us; and if there ever should be, we should be ready to do all possible justice to our injured brethren."

4. The case to which this rule of 1797 applies, must necessarily be understood as being that of a member who demands a trial at the Leaders'-meeting. "The far greater number," it is truly stated, "exclude themselves by utterly forsaking us." (See "Form of Discipline," 1797, sect. vi.) Continued absence from the class-meeting, or other means of grace, without any sufficient reason, or some manifest breach of the laws of God, or of the particular rules of our own Connexion, is usually in such cases reported by the class-leader to the preacher, at the time of the quarterly visitation. If there be no denial of the fact, or satisfactory defence against the charge, on the part of the member, or of his friends who may be present, and if the preacher, in the case of alleged crime or misconduct, be of opinion that the offence

is one of such grave and serious character as to require some public testimony of disapprobation, the immediate exclusion of the negligent or offending member has usually resulted, quietly, and as a matter of course, by the preacher's withholding his Society ticket, and erasing his name from the class-book. But if the member, so charged, deny the allegation of a wilful neglect of our peculiar discipline as to class-meetings, &c., or of a breach of some law of Scripture, or rule of Methodism, and demand a trial, for the proof or disproof thereof, before the Leaders'-meeting, or before a committee of leaders appointed by that meeting, then such trial must, as our law now stands, and has stood ever since 1797, be forthwith conceded. If a majority of the leaders who vote at the meeting shall be "satisfied" that sufficient proof is adduced to establish the fact of a wilful and habitual negligence, or of the violation of some scriptural or Methodistical rule, and shall give a verdict to that effect, then the Leaders'-meeting has discharged its whole part of the painful duty to be performed, and the case is left in the hands of the superintendent. On him devolves, in his pastoral character, as the person whose peculiar call and province it is to "watch over that soul" as one that "must give an account," the sole right and duty of deciding on the measures to be adopted towards the offender, in consequence of the verdict thus pronounced. He must consider his solemn responsibility, personally and officially, to God and to the church of Christ, and his special obligation to care most tenderly and anxiously for the spiritual and eternal welfare of the individual whose conduct is implicated; and, impartially applying the laws of God, as found in the holy Scriptures, or the specific rules of our Body, (as the case may be,) to the facts which have been declared to have been proved, as involving a violation of those laws or rules, he must prayerfully form the best judgment he can respecting the nature and degree of the ecclesiastical penalty most fit to be inflicted: whether censure and reproof, in private or in public,—temporary suspension from Methodistical privileges,—putting the member back again into a state of mere probation,—or, finally, the extreme penalty of expulsion.

5. This the Conference solemnly declare to be, in their conscientious judgment, the import and intent, even according to the most large and liberal interpretation which can with truth and fairness be given, of our rules and usages, collectively considered, and as they now exist, in reference to this part of our pastoral discipline. The power of determining the sentence to be passed on an offender, thus uniformly, and from the beginning reserved to our superintendents, the Conference believe to be essential to the scriptural duties and functions of the pastoral office. Those duties and functions they can on no account consent to abandon, or permit to be frittered away; for that would seriously endanger the purity and peace of our Connexion, on the one hand, and the rights, liberties, and spiritual privileges of our people, on the other hand. The pastoral duty and power, vested in the Christian ministry, to exclude obstinate offenders from our religious fellowship, for manifest violations of the general laws of the holy Scriptures, or of the particular rules of our Connexion, are clearly essential to peace and purity. The correlative power of the pastor, who, if a man of God, "naturally cares" for the flock, to decide, after the case has been proved, on the adoption either of some mild and corrective sentence, or of the severer one of expulsion, according to his own deliberate and conscientious views of the whole affair, and all its circumstances, is equally essential to the protection of an accused individual from the effects of personal prejudice or irritation, or of popular excitement and undue local influence.

6. Asserting, however, in the strongest manner, the scriptural principles now stated, and which have governed our discipline from the beginning, the Conference do nevertheless most cheerfully agree to adopt the following additional guards and securities to our people for the proper exercise of the powers confided to superintendents in cases of expulsion:—

(1.) No sentence of expulsion shall hereafter be pronounced by any superintendent in the same meeting at which the trial shall have taken place. To afford time for full inquiry into the past character of the party, and other circumstances, and for calm and careful deliberation, the sentence shall be deferred for at least one week after the trial; unless the superintendent be fully satisfied at once, that the case is one in which some of the milder forms of discipline should alone be adopted, and that expulsion is not at all to be contemplated.

(2.) In difficult or doubtful cases, the superintendent is now further directed not to pro-

ceed to the actual sentence of expulsion without privately asking information from such individual leaders or other judicious and experienced members of the Society, as are most likely to put him into full possession of all the circumstances necessary to his forming, with due discretion and caution, his own final judgment on the subject.

(3.) Every case of proposed expulsion shall be brought by the superintendent before the weekly meeting of the preachers of his Circuit, in order that he may have the advantage of hearing the opinions and advice of his colleagues and co-pastors, before he shall finally decide on the course he ought to adopt.

(4.) In all cases of dissatisfaction with the sentence of expulsion, pronounced by a superintendent, the aggrieved person shall have, as heretofore, the right of appeal to the annual meeting of the preachers of his District, and even, if still dissatisfied, to the Conference; who will hear him by a committee, or by a special deputation, and endeavour to decide according to truth, and to the requirements of holy Scripture, and of our discipline.

(5.) But as it is readily admitted that the appeal to the full District-committee, or to the Conference, may possibly be found, practically, too inconvenient to admit of a sufficiently prompt and easy application, except in cases of extraordinary interest and importance; the Conference now agrees and resolves, That the principle of the Rule of 1793, (see "Minutes," vol. i., p. 277,) respecting the appointment of minor District-committees in the case of preachers, shall be extended also to the case of all excluded members who choose to avail themselves of its provisions. An excluded person shall, therefore, have the right of selecting any two preachers of the District to which his Circuit belongs, and the superintendent shall select two other such preachers; and these four, with the chairman of the District, (or if it happen that the chairman is himself the superintendent whose act is impugned, then some other preacher to be chosen by the four other members as their chairman *pro tempore*,) shall meet in some convenient place, and shall have the power of modifying, reversing, or confirming the sentence against which such appeal shall be made. Their decision shall in such case be binding on all parties, unless subsequently altered, on further appeal, by the full District-committee, or by the Conference.

(6.) These additional guards and securities for our people against the possibility of rash and unwarrantable expulsions, by granting an appeal from the decision of an individual superintendent to the collective judgment and wisdom of a number of pastors, being cheerfully adopted, the Conference considers it both necessary and reasonable, at the same time, to provide an equally easy, prompt, and convenient remedy for another case, which may possibly arise in seasons of peculiar excitement, though it is confidently hoped that it will be found to be one of only rare occurrence. The case intended, is that of the majority of a Leaders'-meeting, before whom a member accused may be put on his trial, being induced, through some undue local interest, or influence, or prejudice, so far to forget its duty to God, and to the purity, peace, and good order of our Connexion, as to bring in, factiously and perversely, a verdict notoriously inconsistent with the facts proved, and with the plain and obvious meaning, and the general or specific regulations, of the laws of God or of our own Body, as applicable to these facts,—or as even, in certain conceivable cases, to refuse to give any verdict at all;—thus, in either case, defeating the ends of public justice, and preventing, by an abuse of their constitutional functions, the exercise of that discipline which Christ has commanded, and for which He has made the ministers of His church responsible to Himself. It is true that our present rules provide an ultimate remedy for such an occasional and extraordinary occurrence, by the powers given to regular and special District-committees, in 1791, 1792, and subsequent years, and confirmed and extended in 1797. But that remedy, though sufficient, when actually called into operation, to provide for "any critical case," and to "redress any grievance," is not of easy and convenient application. There is the same reason for affording facilities of redress to a superintendent, obstructed in his pastoral duties by the prevalence of a contumacious and factious spirit, as for granting those facilities to an aggrieved member, complaining of the prejudice or severity of his superintendent. The Conference therefore resolves, That a superintendent, complaining of any Leaders'-meeting, for refusing to act its constitutional part, or for acting it factiously or in contradiction to law and evidence, in the trial of an accused member, shall have the same right of prompt

appeal to the revision of a minor District-committee as has just been granted to an excluded member in the other case supposed.

7. In almost every case, it is presumed that this minor District-committee will be sufficient to accomplish the purposes of general peace and purity, and at least "settle everything till the Conference." But if not, there is still in reserve, where it may be found absolutely necessary, the power of calling a special District-meeting, consisting of the whole number of the Christian pastors of that District, who shall be in full connexion with the Conference, according to our existing rules respecting District-committees; whose powers, either in the cases here particularly intended, or in any other cases, nothing contained in this document shall be construed to weaken or abridge. In reference to the constitution of special District-meetings, on whatever subject such meetings may hereafter be deemed necessary, and in order to render their decisions satisfactory to our people, the Conference resolves, That instead of "three of the nearest superintendents," chosen by the superintendent who calls the meeting, four superintendents, or other preachers, may be called in, if either party desire such assistance, and be incorporated with the preachers stationed in the District. Of these, two shall be chosen by each of the two parties concerned in the affairs to be settled by the meeting. The parties may severally make choice of preachers in whom they have most confidence, from any District, without restriction as to contiguity; and the president of the Conference, if he judge it expedient, may attend and preside in all such assemblies, according to the regulations of 1797. The right of appeal to the Conference from the decisions of this as of all other inferior jurisdictions, is to be considered as reserved to all parties.

8. In the preceding articles of this document, reference has been repeatedly made to the law of God contained in the Holy Scriptures, as furnishing, in the trial of members, that primary standard of judgment, by which the innocence or culpability of any particular facts adduced in evidence is ever to be determined. This principle, though obvious, and scarcely needing argumentative defence, the Conference have advisedly made prominent in this statement of their views. Any conduct in a man professing godliness, which can be shown to be decidedly condemned by the precepts and principles of the New Testament, is surely sufficient to justify, if persisted in, the application of a suitable ecclesiastical censure, or other penalty, to such an individual; even though it may not have been previously found necessary to make a distinct and specific rule of our own Society on that exact mode and form of delinquency. The New Testament law of purity, in reference both to the pastors and members of the Christian Church, and with respect both to doctrine and practice,—its often-repeated law of peace and godly quietness,—and its laws of courtesy, brotherly kindness, and mutual charity,—as well as its direction that "all things" should "be done decently and in order," and its requirement of reasonable submission on the part of church members to the scriptural "rule" of those who are "over them in the Lord,"—these are standing enactments of the Gospel, binding on all Christian communities, and therefore binding on the Methodist Societies, without exception. Any obstinate violation of them must be suitably visited, (when proved; or else the authority of Jesus Christ Himself, as the Lord and Master of our department of His spiritual house, will be criminally set at naught; and He will have just cause to say to the ministers and pastors of our community, as He did to one of old time, "I have somewhat against thee.")

9. On considering, in connexion with these scriptural principles, the present state of several Circuits, and the system of organized agitation and disturbance in which certain persons have publicly threatened to proceed, in the course of the coming year, the Conference deem it necessary to take this opportunity of explicitly declaring their views on that subject, and of giving such general directions to the superintendents as the exigency appears to demand.

The self-called "Grand Central Association," considered as to its character of confederacy and combination, and its extensive schemes of disorder and mischief, is, in those respects, somewhat unusual and strange; and some other persons also, avoiding a formal connexion with the Association, have employed themselves with unwonted activity and insidious concert to plans and efforts of factious agitation. Hence, some of the friends of good order have supposed that new rules were wanting to check these new forms of evil, and have called on

the Conference to protect, by some additional enactments, the peaceable and well-disposed members of our numerous Societies from the menaced annoyance and insult. It should, however, be considered that the circumstances which are most characteristic and essential in the constitution and conduct of the "Association," and in the proceedings of other agents of faction, are plainly contrary even to our existing rules and usages, and to those principles, conservative of purity and peace, which the Conference has ever recognised, and guarded by strong enactments. Thus, in 1795, it was resolved, that any local preacher, trustee, steward, or leader, who should disturb the peace of the Connexion by speaking for or against "the old or new plan,"—then the subject of eager contention,—should be expelled from the Society. And in 1799 it was enjoined, that "no man or number of men in our Connexion should, on any account or occasion, be allowed to circulate letters, or call meetings," for the purpose of stirring up our people to divisive and innovating agitations. Such plans and proceedings, moreover, are plainly opposed to the supreme and un repealable law of Christ in the New Testament, already repeatedly referred to in this address. "Debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, backbitings, whisperings, swellings, tumults," are there deprecated and condemned in the strongest and most affecting terms. We are enjoined to mark them that cause divisions,—if any man that is called a brother be a railer, with such an one, no not to eat,—to live in peace, that the God of love and peace may be with us,—to let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil-speaking, be put away from us,—to follow peace with all men,—if it be possible, as much as in us lieth, to live peaceably with all men,—to know them which labour among us, and are over us in the Lord, and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake, and be at peace among ourselves,—to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace,—and, finally, to desire that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and honesty. St. James declares that "where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work; but the wisdom that is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality and without hypocrisy; and the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." The Conference, for these reasons, deem it unnecessary at present to provide against these modern forms of offence by any new and more specific regulation; because so much of moral evil and unchristian practice is involved in the plans and proceedings of the said Association,—and of other similar confederacies, by whatever name disguised,—that to give them countenance, or to co-operate with them, is to be a partaker and abettor of various palpable transgressions of the commandments of God, and a violator, in some instances, of the letter, and, in others, of the whole spirit and tenor, of our established rules. It is therefore hereby declared to be the unanimous judgment of the Conference, That any person who, instead of peaceably retiring from our Connexion, if he decidedly disapprove of our system either of doctrine or discipline, and cannot conscientiously even acquiesce in them, endeavours to retain and to employ his position among us for the purposes of opposition and strife,—or who continues, after due admonition, to be a member of "The Grand Central Association," or of any other confederacy formed for the object of systematic agitation,—is guilty of a flagrant transgression of that morality of the New Testament, the observance of which was a principal condition of his admission into our Society, and must be considered to have justly forfeited his claim to the privileges of our religious fellowship. In applying to particular cases this righteous general rule, the Conference exhorts all the superintendents to exercise, in connexion with a holy firmness, the moderation and mercy of the Gospel; bearing long, and dealing tenderly, though faithfully, with the weak, the ill-informed, and the misled; while they do not shrink from the effectual execution of necessary Christian discipline on those who by overt acts of hostility and disturbance identify themselves as the leaders, or open partisans, of disaffection and faction. The sound and satisfied majority of our Societies—a majority happily so immense as to render all comparative calculations unnecessary—have a just claim on us for protection in the quiet enjoyment of their religious privileges: a claim which some of them have most forcibly urged, and which it is our bounden duty to meet with a discreet but decisive enforcement of our discipline on those whom milder methods shall fail to reclaim from their course of disturbance and mischief.

III. MEETINGS FOR COMMUNICATION WITH THE CONFERENCE BY MEMORIAL, ON SUBJECTS OF LOCAL CONCERN, OR ON THE GENERAL LAWS OF THE CONNEXION.

THE spirit and substance of our present regulations and authorized usages on this subject the Conference considers to be embodied in the following summary statement:—

1. The Conference have said that they, as well as the District-committees, will gladly receive useful intelligence and information, even from any individual member of the Society, "on whatever concerns themselves or their people." (See "Minutes" of 1796.)

2. "The Leaders'-meeting is the proper meeting for the Society, and the Quarterly-meeting for the Circuit." ("Minutes" of 1797.) From those meetings, therefore, the Conference will receive communications, whenever they deem it necessary to make them, on subjects connected with the proper business of their own Societies, or of their own Circuits, respectively.

3. After full discussion and deliberation, it was judged (in 1797) that "other formal meetings, in general, would be contrary to the Methodist economy, and very prejudicial in their consequences." The grounds of this judgment were, doubtless, such as these:—The "other formal meetings," to which reference is made, are obviously unnecessary for the purposes of individual representations of fact, or for communication with the Conference on the really difficult and important affairs of a particular Society or Circuit; the fullest provision being made for all these cases by the preceding articles of the same rule. If unnecessary, they are for that reason undesirable; because occasions of contention and debate ought not to be needlessly multiplied, especially in a religious society, which is bound by the law of Christ to "follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Christians should rather sacrifice unessential points of opinion, or matters of personal predilection, than endanger, by an eager obtrusion of their own views, the maintenance of tranquillity and good feeling in the communities to which they belong. If the object of those who wish for the "other formal meetings," to which the Minute of 1797 objects, be the suggestion of any improvements in our various public institutions, then, too, are they, generally speaking, as unnecessary as in the case of Society or Circuit business; for in all those institutions committees are now appointed, in which preachers and laymen of unimpeachable integrity and intelligence have a place, which committees have, as such, regular official communication with the Conference, on every subject connected with their respective trusts and interests. "Other formal meetings" cannot be needed in order to obtain redress for the alleged misconduct or mal-administration of any particular preacher or preachers; because the most ample means of obtaining such redress are already secured to complaining parties connected with the Circuit immediately concerned, by our existing rules respecting the trial of accused preachers. It seems, then, that no very material and legitimate business remains for the "other formal meetings" in question, except it be the transmission to the Conference of opinions respecting some desired change in the general laws of the Connexion. Now, it should be considered that frequent alterations in the laws of a religious community, when they have once been deliberately settled, are neither safe nor advantageous. Such questions should not be hastily or capriciously mooted, as they usually tend to "gender strifes," rather than to "godly edifying." A habit of petty, meddling, speculative legislation would be a dire calamity. It is not good in matters of discipline, any more than of doctrine, to be "ever learning, and never coming to the knowledge of the truth;"—ever making new laws, or trying to mend existing ones, instead of keeping those already in force, and endeavouring to turn them to the best account for the spiritual benefit of ourselves and others.

4. For reasons probably similar to those now stated, the Conference of 1797 did not feel themselves at liberty to establish or encourage "other formal meetings." They did not, however, wholly prohibit them, as matters of occasional occurrence; being willing, it appears, to provide if possible, for the permanent tranquillity of the Connexion in circumstances, extraordinary as well as ordinary. They therefore appended to the statement last quoted the following rule:—

"In order to be as tender as possible, consistently with what we believe to be essential to the welfare of our Societies, we allow that other formal meetings may be held, if they first

receive the approbation of the superintendent, and the Leaders' or Quarterly-meetings: provided also, that the superintendent, if he please, be present at every such meeting."

The present Conference have considered with the most respectful attention the wish which appears to have been of late revived among several of our sincere friends, that some direct and authorized medium of occasional communication with the Conference should now be provided for our people, in reference to a certain class of subjects, which do indeed concern the general laws, and consequently the practical administration, of Methodism; but which, because they do not affect them in their individual capacity as members, nor yet relate, strictly or directly, to the local affairs of their particular Society or Circuit, cannot, for that reason, be made the topics of discussion or of memorial in the Leaders' or Quarterly-meetings without violating a great and important general maxim, essential to a due observance of the Christian law of peace, and to the orderly transaction of our public business; viz., that every meeting among us shall confine itself to its proper and definite province, do its own work in the spirit of piety and kindness, and refrain from interfering with the work of others. Anxious to maintain this maxim in its full authority, and concurring generally in all the reasons stated in the preceding article, as rendering "other formal meetings" undesirable and unnecessary, (except, perhaps, on very special occasions,) this Conference are, nevertheless solicitous, like their venerable predecessors of 1797, to meet, as far as the public peace and safety will permit, the wish above described. On careful deliberation, the Conference are of opinion that the principle of the concluding portion of the law of 1797, already quoted, will be found to furnish the best and most expedient means of accomplishing all that can be reasonably desired. But it must be confessed that the details of the rule, as it now stands, appear to be so vague, and otherwise defective, as to require considerable alteration and extension. The Conference, therefore, now agree as follows; viz.,—

(1.) That, after the final close of the June Quarterly-meeting in every year, the superintendent shall detain the Circuit stewards, and all the Society stewards, who may be present, whether belonging to the Societies in the Circuit town, or to those in the country places; and shall ascertain from them whether there really exists, in that Circuit, a general or considerable dissatisfaction with any of our existing rules, or a prevalent and earnest desire for the enactment of any new and additional regulations. If it be the opinion of a majority of the persons so consulted, or even of any considerable proportion of them, that the wish for alteration is strong and extensive, and moreover, that the matter is clearly of such importance as to justify the calling of a Special Circuit-meeting, in order to consider the propriety of sending a memorial to the Conference on the subject, then, and in every such case, the superintendent is hereby directed and required to summon, by good and sufficient notices to all the parties concerned, such Special Circuit-meeting, which shall assemble within a period of not less than seven days, and not exceeding ten days, from the time of the June Quarterly-meeting. The power of a *veto*, in reference to the calling of such meetings, given to the superintendents by the old rule of 1797, is hereby wholly repealed and abolished; and the provision above stated is substituted for it.

(2.) That, whereas the rule of 1797 did not at all define the composition of the "other formal meetings" partially allowed by it, it is now expedient to define the constitution of the Special Circuit-meeting above mentioned, if one shall be convened, in the following manner; viz.: Such meeting shall include,—

All the travelling preachers of the Circuit, comprehending the supernumerary preachers, if any;

The Circuit stewards;

The steward of the town Society, or of all the Societies (if there be more than one) in the Circuit town;

One of the stewards of each of those other Societies which were entered on the latest Circuit-schedule as containing fifty members or upwards;

The male class-leaders in the Circuit, of ten years' continuous and uninterrupted standing in that office;

The local preachers in the Circuit, of the same continuous and uninterrupted standing, since they were first placed on the plan as local preachers fully admitted;

The trustees of the chapel or chapels of the Circuit town, (if regularly settled, and so secured to the use of the Connexion,) being members of the Society ;

And one of the trustee-treasurers or trustee-stewards of every other regularly settled and secured chapel in the Circuit, being a member of the Society.

The superintendent, or, in the case of his unavoidable absence, some other travelling preacher appointed by him, shall always preside in the meeting.

(3.) That at such meeting, any member thereof may propose for consideration, as before stated, the propriety of memorializing the Conference respecting the repeal or alteration of any of our existing laws, or of the enactment of any additional rule. Such memorial, if approved by a majority of the persons present, shall be signed forthwith by the individuals who concur in its adoption, and then immediately placed in the hands of the superintendent, who is made responsible for its delivery, personally or otherwise, to the president of the Conference, on or before the second day of its ensuing session. And all such memorials shall be received by the Conference, and referred to a Committee of its members, who shall carefully examine, consider, and classify the whole, and report their opinion thereupon to the Conference.

(4.) That the right of memorial on the subject of our general legislation, thus recognised and allowed, shall, however, be exercised under the following regulations, which the Conference considers to be both sound and reasonable in principle, and really necessary in order to the prevention of great and serious evils :—First : Notice in writing shall be given to the superintendent, for the information of all who desire it, at least three days before the day of meeting, of the precise subject on which it is intended to propose that any memorial shall be sent to the Conference ; and no proposal, of which such timely notice has not been given, shall be allowed to be brought forward for that year. Secondly : All memorials requesting any change in our laws, shall be limited to such changes only as are consistent with the essential principles of Wesleyan Methodism, and within the pale of our established constitution. The Conference cannot fairly be required to receive any propositions of a manifestly revolutionary character, or which are wholly subversive of that system of doctrine or discipline which has been confided to them by Mr. Wesley as a sacred deposit, and which, as they believe, has been also committed to their keeping by the providence and grace of God. Thirdly : The rules, whose alteration, repeal, or enactment may become the subject of discussion and memorial in such meetings, must be such rules only as have operated, or are intended to operate, in the government of the Societies at large. This is in literal accordance with the limitation adopted in 1797, in the analogous case of the “new laws,” to be submitted to the consideration of the September Quarterly-meetings. The disciplinary jurisdiction of the preachers over each other, and their right of regulating among themselves all that relates peculiarly and specifically to the Christian ministry, and the pastoral office, are not to be considered as subjects open to the official interference by memorial of the meetings now constituted. Fourthly : The special meeting of one Circuit shall not be at liberty to intermeddle with the local affairs or proceedings of any other Circuit or Circuits ; respecting which its information must often, of necessity, be exceedingly partial and defective, and its interference, consequently, if attempted, must be as useless, and even mischievous, as it would be culpably officious, offensive, and unconstitutional. (See “Minutes” of 1828, vol. vi., pp. 399–401.) With these necessary limitations, the superintendents are directed to allow, in meetings constituted as aforesaid, the free and friendly discussions of our people, and to take charge of any memorial from them, couched in proper and respectful terms.

IV. PROPOSED REVISION AND CLASSIFICATION OF OUR RULES IN GENERAL.

On this point the Conference have only to announce, at present, the appointment of a committee, who are charged with the duty of carefully considering the subject in all its bearings, and of adopting such measures as they may deem most effectual for preparing—if on examination they find it practicable and expedient—a new, revised, and improved edition of “The Form of Discipline,” first published in 1797, with proper Explanations and Enlargements. The result of these inquiries and endeavours is to be laid before the Conference, at their next meeting in 1836. The members of this Committee are,—the president of the

Conference, the Rev. Joseph Taylor, Dr. Bunting, the Rev. Thomas Jackson, the Rev. John Waterhouse, the Rev. John Bowers, the Rev. George Cubitt, the Rev. John Hannah, the Rev. John Beecham, and the Rev. William M. Bunting; who have power to add to their number any preachers or other friends, either in London or in the country, whose assistance may be found desirable, for the purpose of advice and consultation, in reference to this difficult but very interesting and desirable undertaking.

Such, dearly beloved brethren, are the communications we have now to make to you, in respect to some of those topics which have of late engaged a more than usual attention in our Body. We earnestly hope that the explanations now given of the import and design of some of our rules, and the modifications which we have seen it right to adopt, will meet the approbation of our enlightened and judicious friends, and satisfy all men of peace, piety, and moderation. It is on such persons only that this document, and the measures which it announces, are expected or designed to operate. May it please Almighty God to give us a right understanding in all things, and to send us abundant spiritual prosperity!

Signed on behalf and by order of the Conference,

RICHARD REECE, *President.*

ROBERT NEWTON, *Secretary.*

Sheffield, August 18th, 1835.

Q, page 365.—*Resolutions on the Centenary.*

THE Committee, appointed by the last Conference to consider this subject, reported that, in pursuance of that appointment, they have held three meetings, which were numerously attended both by ministers, and by other gentlemen from different parts of the kingdom; and that, after reading various letters, and maturely considering and comparing the suggestions therein contained, as well as the opinions of several highly influential and judicious friends, who addressed the meetings, they *unanimously* adopted the following resolutions, as expressing their views and wishes on this interesting question:—

“I. That this committee cordially approves of the proposed celebration, in the ensuing year, (1839,) of the Centenary of the formation of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, under the providential instrumentality of the ever-to-be-revered and venerated John Wesley.

“II. That the primary object of the said celebration should be the *religious* and *devotional* improvement of the Centenary, by such public services in our chapels as the Conference may judge it proper to appoint or to recommend.

“III. That in connexion with this primary object, it is deemed right and expedient by this committee, that there should be a *general pecuniary contribution*, by means both of private donations and public collections, through all our congregations and Societies, at home and abroad;—such contribution being intended as a practical thank-offering to Almighty God, for the personal and public benefits derived, by His blessing, from the labours of Mr. Wesley, and of his coadjutors and successors, during the last hundred years, and from the direct and indirect influences of Wesleyan Methodism, not merely on our own religious community, but also on the Christian church at large, and on the spiritual interests of the world.

“IV. That, after full consideration, it is the decided opinion of the committee, that the connexional fund, to be raised on the occasion of the Centenary, should be applied, in the first place, in the erection of suitable premises for the accommodation of students to be hereafter received into the Wesleyan Theological Institution, (whether such students be designed for home or for missionary service,) on an enlarged scale, adapted to the increasing demands of the Connexion for the benefit of its rising ministry;—and, in the second place, in assisting to provide commodious premises in London for the use of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, adequate to the greatly augmented and augmenting extent of its multifarious and important business.

“V. That this committee further recommend, that our friends be affectionately advised to make some arrangements, by private and local efforts in each Circuit respectively, for enabling the children of our Sunday and other charity schools, and also the poor members of

our Societies, to participate in the pleasure and benefit of the intended celebration, on the day, or on one of the days, to be set apart for that purpose; so as to engage their pious and hearty concurrence in the thanksgivings, congratulations, and prayers of this great occasion;—the specific plan for the attainment of this object, and for the distribution of any local fund which may be raised for the poor members, being left entirely to the discretion of the preachers and friends in every Circuit which shall adopt this suggestion, according to their own views of what will be most convenient in each particular case, and most in accordance with the general religious services which may be hereafter appointed for the Connexion at large.

“VI. That this committee earnestly recommends to the immediate consideration of the Connexion the case of our worn-out ministers, and that of the widows of our deceased ministers. The committee respectfully suggest the propriety and necessity of some further provision for their support upon the principle of the Children’s Fund; and would be particularly gratified, if such an arrangement could be effected, and provision made for its future practical operation, during the coming Centenary year; believing that it would be, in connexion with other modes of celebrating that occasion, an eminently fitting and beneficial testimonial of the gratitude of the Connexion to those of its ministers who are no longer capable of regular and constant labours, and of its pious care for the widows of those preachers who are gone to their reward.”

On receiving this report of the committee, the Conference unanimously resolved:—

1. That the Conference gratefully approves of the Resolutions of the Centenary committee, as now reported; and cordially adopts them, in substance, as its own.

2. That a day of special and united supplication for the blessing of God upon the intended Centenary services, and for the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon ourselves and our people during the coming year, shall be appointed by the president;—such day to be fixed for as early a period in January, 1839, as he may judge most convenient, and duly announced by him in the Methodist Magazine, and otherwise, according to his discretion.

3. That the official discourse, usually delivered before the Conference by the preacher who had just retired from the presidency shall be considered, at the next Conference in 1839, as the Centenary Sermon; and that the Rev. Thomas Jackson, now our president, then the ex-president, be accordingly appointed to discharge that duty.

4. That our president is also requested to prepare and publish as early as possible a brief but comprehensive work, on the subject of the Centenary; including, with succinct notices of the origin, progress, and present state of Wesleyan Methodism, and of the leading facts in the life and history of the revered Founder of our Societies, such remarks as may assist our friends in the devout improvement of the occasion.

5. That one day be set apart during the session of the Conference in July, 1839, to be employed in suitable religious services by the preachers and friends who may then be in attendance at Liverpool.

6. That, in all other places, the month of October, 1839, is deemed the most suitable period for the Centenary services; and that arrangements shall accordingly be made for such services in every chapel, on such day or days of that month as may be found most convenient. The school collection, usually made in October, shall for that one year be made in September; and it is earnestly requested that no collection for ordinary local purposes shall be made during that month.

7. That the president is authorized to nominate and invite a select committee of preachers and laymen, from different parts of the Connexion, to meet himself and our secretary at Manchester, in October, 1838, or as soon afterwards as may be convenient, for the purpose of carrying into effect the resolutions of the former Centenary committee who met at Bristol, as above recorded;—of filling up the outline therein sketched;—of considering such other suggestions, in accordance with the general principle of those resolutions, as may be submitted to them;—and, especially, of appointing local sub-committees in different places, for promoting the general Centenary Fund, as described in the third and fourth resolution of the Bristol committee. The committee, at and after their first meeting in Manchester, shall have power to add to their number, if they find it expedient; and to adjourn to such times and places as may be deemed requisite.

8. The Conference requests the Centenary committee just mentioned, to consider and report upon the suggestions which have been offered, and which will be explained to them by the president, as to the expediency of appointing a special deputation from the Conference of 1839, consisting of its president, ex-president, and secretary, and other members, for the purpose of visiting all the seven cities or towns where Conferences are now held, and a few other places of peculiar importance or interest in the history of Wesleyan Methodism, or likely to become Conference-towns, (such as Oxford, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, and Hull,) in order to assist the preachers there stationed in the religious services, to be held in October, 1839.

9. To the same committee the Conference also refers, with unfeigned and respectful gratitude to the gentlemen who originated and supported the sixth resolution of the Bristol committee, the plan therein suggested for the benefit of the worn-out preachers and widows of deceased preachers; and requests their collective opinion as to the propriety of adopting it, and as to the proper time and means of carrying it into effect, if it be approved, in a way conformable to our established rules on such subjects.

R, page 383.—*Resolutions of the Committee of Appropriation of the Centenary Fund.*

I. MOVED by the Rev. George Marsden, and seconded by Francis Riggall, Esq.,

"That the committee, on hearing the statement of the general treasurer, that the amount of contributions to the Centenary Fund exceeds £200,000, and that instalments to the amount of £80,000 have been actually paid up, desire to express their unfeigned thanksgivings to Almighty God for this remarkable manifestation of the spirit of pious liberality; and that, even in times of great commercial depression and difficulty, His people have offered so willingly after this sort, in order to further those great objects which are contemplated by the Centenary Fund."

II. Moved by Thomas Farmer, Esq., and seconded by Thomas Marriott, Esq.,

"That the committee hereby adopt the proposition of the general sub-committee, to divide the amount already paid up, among the various objects of this fund, to the amount of one half of the sums originally appropriated, according to the following scale:—

	£.
1. For the purposes of the Theological Institution.....	27,500
2. For the Wesleyan Centenary Buildings, and to the Wesleyan Missionary Society	25,000
3. For the relief of distressed chapels	18,500
4. For the better support of worn-out preachers and their widows.....	8,100
5. Towards the erection of a Centenary monumental chapel in Dublin	2,500
6. To the Wesleyan Education Committee	2,500."

III. Moved by James Wood, Esq., and seconded by the Rev. Thomas Waugh,

"That the same *pro rata* principle be applied in the distribution of any sums which may be received in future, under the direction of the sub-committee."

IV. Moved by the Rev. Robert Newton, and seconded by George R. Chappell, Esq.,

"That out of the public collections to be made in October next, in 'all our congregations and Societies, at home and abroad,' a sum not exceeding one half of the total amount may be applied, by each Society, to those local purposes contemplated in the Minutes of Conference, especially for enabling the children of our Sunday and other charity schools, and also the poor members of our Societies, to participate in the pleasure and benefit of the intended celebration, on the day, or on one of the days, to be set apart for that purpose."

V. Moved by George R. Chappell, Esq., and seconded by John R. Kay, Esq.,

"That it be recommended to the several local committees, out of the moiety thus placed at their disposal, to provide a copy of the Centenary Volume for every Wesleyan Sunday school and other Wesleyan library in the Circuit; and, wherever practicable and advisable, to present a copy of the volume to every local preacher and leader."

VI. Moved by James Wood, Esq., and seconded by Thomas Walker, Esq.,

"That this meeting respectfully recommends to the Conference, in appointing the general committee of the Wesleyan Theological Institution for the next year, to add to it the names of such gentlemen resident in the north, as may be suitable to serve the office of a local committee, who shall be directed, in conjunction with the officers of the Institution, to look out for a situation suitable for the purpose of an Institution-house, in the neighbourhood of Manchester; and, especially, to be in readiness to consider and report to the general committee any offer of property that may be presented during the next year."

VII. Moved by Dr. Bunting, and seconded by the Rev. Robert Newton,

"That the thanks of this meeting are due, and are hereby presented, to the Rev. Thomas Jackson, for the Centenary volume, which he has lately published, and for the highly satisfactory and able manner in which he has complied with the request of the Conference."

VIII. Moved by Dr. Bunting, and seconded by the Rev. Thomas Jackson,

"That the warm and cordial thanks of this meeting be given to James Wood, Esq., the treasurer of the Centenary Fund, and to the Manchester sub-committee, and especially to the secretaries of that committee, for their most able and indefatigable services to the Centenary cause during the past year;—services to which the Centenary Fund is especially indebted, under the blessing of God, for the happy progress which has already been made in the attainment of its important objects."

IX. Moved by the Rev. Edmund Grindrod, and seconded by the Rev. Joseph Taylor,

"That this meeting be adjourned to such time and place as the president of the Conference shall appoint."

S, page 385.—*Report of the Wesleyan Methodist Centenary Fund.*

RECEIPTS.

	Circuit Expenses.				Total Receipts.		
	£.	s.	d.		£.	s.	d.
London District	132	15	11	.....	19,380	14	1
Bedford and Northampton District	53	0	7	..	4,927	8	10
Kent District	50	16	10	.....	3,196	11	8
Norwich and Lynn District	87	18	5	.....	3,015	15	5
Oxford District	27	8	3	.....	2,119	8	5
Portsmouth District	28	12	2	.....	1,454	11	3
Guernsey District	23	7	0	.....	2,744	9	7
Devonport District	24	12	8	.....	2,368	16	1
Cornwall District	33	18	9	.....	4,667	16	4
Exeter District	26	18	8	.....	3,195	7	2
Bristol District	61	7	10	.....	6,566	13	4
Bath District	28	17	9	.....	3,903	0	4
South and North Wales District	67	1	5	.....	3,196	11	3
Birmingham and Shrewsbury District	141	19	8	.....	11,262	18	2
Macclesfield District	80	4	7	.....	6,029	3	11
Liverpool District	189	19	1	.....	8,347	0	9
Manchester and Bolton District	84	12	5	.....	28,950	2	9
Halifax and Bradford District	60	16	5	.....	12,394	17	7
Leeds District	50	3	4	.....	14,303	14	1
Sheffield District	59	17	1	.....	9,055	3	9
Nottingham and Derby District	72	19	0	.....	7,110	3	0
Lincoln District	66	12	7	.....	4,798	6	11
Hull District	58	7	8	.....	7,574	11	4
York District	52	11	5	.....	6,495	8	2
Whitby and Darlington District	20	16	8	.....	4,973	14	9
Carried forward	£1,590	16	2		182,032	8	11

	Circuit Expenses.			Total Receipts.		
	£	s.	d.	£	s.	d.
Brought forward.....	1,590	16	2	182,032	8	11
Newcastle District.....	38	6	1	5,454	6	11
Carlisle District.....	33	5	5	2,209	13	1
Isle of Man District	8	3	11	386	10	10
Scotland	6	15	1	941	13	11
Ireland				14,519	9	4
Foreign Stations				10,640	6	8
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Total Amount of Subscriptions received.....				£216,184	9	8
Circuit Expenses carried to Creditor side	£1,677	6	8			
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Balance in favour of the Medal Committee				912	17	11
Total Amount of Interest on the Account				4,841	16	9

N. B.—The Balance in the General Treasurer's hand is carried to a Supplementary Balance Sheet, which will be published, together with Lists of any further Subscriptions or Instalments received, as soon as the Accounts of the Fund can be finally wound up.

Total Receipts..... £221,939 4 4

DISBURSEMENTS.

WESLEYAN THEOLOGICAL INSTITUTION.

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Grant of Committee for the Purchase and Erection of Premises at Richmond	24,000	0	0			
Ditto Do. Do. at Didsbury ...	16,000	0	0			
Further Grant to complete the Buildings at Didsbury	2,500	0	0			
Ditto to complete the Furnishing at Ditto	900	0	0			
Grant of Committee for the Formation of the General Endowment Fund.....	15,000	0	0			
Moiety of the Surplus, viz., £22,000, to Do. Do. ...	11,000	0	0			
Interest on the above Sums while in the Treasurer's hands, which has been paid to the Treasurer of the Wesleyan Theological Institution for the purposes of Current Expenditure during the last Three years	2,209	19	1	71,609	19	1

WESLEYAN MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

Grant for the Purchase of Site and Buildings, in Bishopsgate Street, for Centenary Hall and Mission-House	15,000	0	0			
Grant for the Erection and Completion of the new Buildings required for the Monumental and General Purposes of the Connexion, and for the Business of the Missionary Society.....	14,433	13	7			
Interest on Outlay before payment of the above	566	6	5			
Grant for Purchase and Outfit of the Missionary Ship "Triton"	6,000	0	0			
Grant for Fund for the Support of Worn-out Missionaries, and their Widows and Orphans.....	10,000	0	0			
Grant for Mission Chapel Fund	5,000	0	0			

Carried forward £122,609 19 1 71,609 19 1

	£.	s.	d.	£.	s.	d.
Brought forward.....	122,609	19	1	71,609	19	1
Grant for Mission Schools, and for School-houses in Ireland	6,000	0	0			
Grant, Additional, for the General Purposes of the Missionary Committee	2,000	0	0			
Moiety of the Surplus, viz., £22,000, towards the Liquidation of the Mission Debt.....	11,000	0	0	70,000	0	0

CENTENARY CHAPEL RELIEF FUND.

Grant for the Relief of Distressed Chapels	35,000	0	0			
Further Grant for Ditto	3,000	0	0			
Interest on the above sums while in the Treasurer's hands...	736	0	10	38,736	0	10

WORN-OUT MINISTERS' AND WIDOWS' RELIEF FUND.

Grant for the Entire Liquidation of the Debt on the Kingswood and Woodhouse Grove Schools, thereby restoring to the use of the Preachers' Annuity Society £1,000. per annum, heretofore applied to that purpose	5,700	0	0			
Grant for the Extinction of the Debt on the Old Auxiliary Fund	1,500	0	0			
Grant for the Temporary Support of the New Auxiliary Fund	9,000	0	0			
Interest on the above Sums while in the Treasurer's hands .	64	8	3	16,264	8	3

CHAPELS IN IRELAND.

Grant to the Irish Chapel Fund	2,000	0	0			
Interest on Ditto.....	118	12	2			
Grant to the Dublin Centenary Chapel.....	5,000	0	0			
Interest on Ditto.....	296	10	5	7,415	2	7

WESLEYAN EDUCATION.

Grant to the Wesleyan Education Committee	5,000	0	0			
Interest on Ditto.....	51	19	3	5,051	19	3

BRITISH AND FOREIGN BIBLE SOCIETY.

Grant to the Bible Society, as an expression of Respect for the objects, principles, and exertions of that Society; and in acknowledgment of the numerous and valuable assistances rendered by it, during many past years, to the Wesleyan Missions, in various parts of the world .				1,000	0	0
Expenses incurred by Circuit Treasurers, as per Contra ...				1,677	6	8
Expenses incurred by District Treasurers				286	12	3
Expenses incurred in Ireland				425	8	0
Expenses incurred by General Treasurer, viz:—						
Advertising Lists, &c., in the "Watchman".....	1,466	13	7			
Expenses of Deputations to attend Centenary Meetings .	439	16	8			
Centenary Volumes for Presentation, and for Printing in London	701	3	5			
Expenses in Manchester, including Printing, Stationery, Postages, &c., &c.	578	17	1	3,186	10	9
Balance in the hands of the General Treasurer.....				6,285	16	8

Total Disbursements.....£221,939 4 4

T, page 398.—*Plan of the New Auxiliary Fund.*

I. AFTER a very long and careful deliberation, it appeared to the sub-committee that the future allowances from the proposed new and enlarged Auxiliary Fund should have respect, with some reasonable modifications, to the scale already adopted by the preachers for their own Annuitant Society; and that, in conformity with the plan established by that institution, the annuitants should be divided into seven classes, such classes being arranged according to the number of years spent in the service of the Connexion by each preacher, to whom, or to whose widow, while she continues such, the additional annuity is granted from the fund which it is now proposed to create by the contributions of our Societies and friends. The scale finally adopted as fair and considerate, taking into account the claims of the several classes on other funds, and various other circumstances, is the following:—

1. SUPERNUMERARY PREACHERS.

				Proposed annuity to each.
1st Class :	Preachers who have travelled 39 years and upwards			£50
2nd Class :	Do.	Do.	from 34 to 39 years	£45
3rd Class :	Do.	Do.	from 29 to 34 years	£40
4th Class :	Do.	Do.	from 24 to 29 years	£35
5th Class :	Do.	Do.	from 18 to 24 years	£25
6th Class :	Do.	Do.	from 12 to 18 years	£20
7th Class :	Do.	Do.	under 12 years	£15

2. WIDOWS.

1st Class,	Whose Husbands travelled for various terms of years, according to the classes in which they are entered,—the classification of widows being regulated according to the same scale as that above specified in the case of supernumeraries.	£18
2nd Class,		£15
3rd Class,		£15
4th Class,		£15
5th Class,		£15
6th Class,		£12
7th Class,		£10

According to this classification and scale, there are now 174 supernumeraries, and 176 widows, making 350 persons in the aggregate, whose annuities, rated surely at sums which no just or benevolent person can possibly deem too high, or more than a religious Connexion like ours justly owes to its worn-out ministers, and their widows, will require annually the sum of £9,317.

II. To provide the usual small allowance towards furniture for preachers on their retiring from the itinerancy, being only £30 to each;—and to provide in future a like sum of £30 towards furniture for each widow; (which on every principle ought always to have been deemed at least equally right and necessary in the case of widows as of retiring preachers, though hitherto strangely neglected;)—will require, taking the annual average number of preachers so retiring, and of widows needing furniture, to be 29, at £30 each, a further sum of £870 per annum.

III. To these sums must be added the usual education allowance, from the age of 8 to 14, for 71 daughters of supernumeraries and widows at 8 guineas each, and for 19 sons of supernumeraries and widows, from the age of 8 to 14, at £12 each; and the sum of £250 usually granted for the education of children of supernumeraries and widows in Ireland; making together, for education of orphans, the sum of £1,074. 8s.

IV. Further sums must be provided,—partly to enable the committee of the new Auxiliary Fund to meet, by small annual and discretionary grants, various cases of special and extraordinary affliction or distress, which will from time to time arise, (especially in the case of those supernumeraries and widows who belong to the classes which can claim only the lowest annuities,)—and partly to meet miscellaneous annual expenses for printing, &c. The average sum estimated as requisite to be reserved for those purposes is £350 per annum.

V. These various items of expenditure, taken collectively, amount to £12,111. 8s.; a sum which may at first seem large, when viewed in the aggregate, but cannot by thoughtful per-

sons be deemed excessive, when analysed and distributed among so many supernumeraries, widows, and orphans; nor is it so large as to be beyond the means of easy attainment, when it is considered that our Societies alone, in Great Britain and Ireland, (to say nothing of other friends who may feel it a duty and privilege to help in this case,) numbered at the last Conference 323,045 members.

VI. The ways and means of raising the sum thus ascertained to be requisite, for the great work of justice and benevolence now contemplated, were next brought under the consideration of the sub-committee.

Several very excellent friends were at one time disposed to think that this better provision for worn-out preachers, widows, &c., might be, and ought to be, accomplished by means of a very large appropriation, once for all, from the Centenary Fund. But they were soon convinced that this opinion was altogether fallacious. The provision required is an annual and perpetual one. To have set apart and funded a sum sufficient for the purpose of securing a provision of such amount, would have required that all, and more than all, which the Centenary Fund has even now raised, munificent and noble as that effort has been, should have been devoted to, and absorbed by, this one object, to the total neglect of all our other connexional obligations and institutions. To this the preachers themselves would have felt insuperable objections. And, on consideration, the numerous friends assembled in the Centenary committees were unanimously of opinion that it is in itself much more just and fitting, that the provision to be made for the supernumeraries and widows of the Connexion should come from the living church, to which the services of the preachers are from year to year devoted, by an annual contribution, rather than be raised, even if such a plan had been practicable, by one great exertion made only by the present race and generation of Methodists. The sub-committee therefore resolved to adhere to "the principle of the Children's Fund," recommended by the Bristol committee and Conference, as the model according to which, mainly and substantially, the supplies for the new Auxiliary Fund should be procured. The distinguishing feature of the Children's Fund, as far as the analogy is applicable to the present case, is this: That each individual Circuit should be held responsible for raising within itself its fair quota of the whole sum annually required, in proportion to its number of members in Society from year to year. Applying this principle, it was at first supposed that a contribution of only fourpence per annum from each member, on the average, would, with some other available resources, meet the case for the present. This calculation, however, was hastily made, in the absence of the documents necessary to obtain an accurate result; and on examination it was found that the average contribution from each Circuit must be at least sixpence per annum from every member. This, reckoned on the number of members as returned at the Conference of 1838, will raise the sum of £8,076. 15s., towards the required amount of £12,111. 8s.; leaving an annual deficit of £4,034. 13s. To supply that deficit, for the present, it will be indispensable that the private subscriptions of our more affluent friends, who have hitherto kindly contributed their support to the old Auxiliary Fund, in the months of June and July, should be, at least for a few years, generously continued, and applied to the enlarged objects and purposes of the new Auxiliary Fund, with which, of course, the old Auxiliary Fund will be consolidated and identified. Those private subscriptions in Great Britain and Ireland may, it is hoped, be fairly estimated at a sum which will, with the general contribution from the members of sixpence each per annum, be quite sufficient to cover the whole demand. When the time shall arrive, at which, by the blessing of God, the numbers in our Societies shall be greatly increased, it may possibly be found practicable to dispense with the private subscriptions. This would greatly simplify the whole of our financial economy in this department, and is a result to be much desired. The result would indeed be accelerated, if it should be found that, on the average of members and of Circuits, the general contribution should in a few years produce considerably more than the proposed minimum of sixpence per member. In the mean time, the liberal private subscriptions and occasional donations of our more affluent friends will be indispensable to the success of the present plan.

VII. With respect to the mode of raising the new general contribution, before explained, after careful consideration, the sub-committee propose as follows:—

1. Each Circuit is to be responsible to the treasurers of the Auxiliary Fund for a sum equal to sixpence per member : taking the numbers for the Circuit in all cases as returned to, and published in the Minutes of, the preceding Conference.

2. In order to raise this quota, a distinct and special appeal shall be made annually, in every class-meeting without exception, to the justice and good feeling of our people. The times of making such appeal shall be, uniformly and in all cases, (in order to avoid injurious interference with other applications,) that of the first and second class-meetings in the month of January of each year. Each leader shall be furnished with a brief printed statement of the case of the supernumeraries, widows, and orphans, which he shall read to the members of his class at each of the two meetings specified. He shall then request their voluntary contributions, according to their respective means and circumstances, in aid of the object contemplated, and shall receive and enter in a separate book, properly ruled for such entries to be intrusted to his care for that specific purpose, any sum, be it small or large, which they may be disposed to give. It is hoped that scarcely any of the classes will fall below the average minimum of sixpence per member ; and that many of them, especially in the larger Societies, will considerably exceed it.

3. In every Circuit, at the Christmas Quarterly-meeting, a Circuit-treasurer for the Auxiliary Fund shall be appointed, whose office it shall be,

(1.) To meet the class-leaders in the last week of January, in order to receive and enter the sums which they shall severally have received from the members in the early part of that month.

(2.) To see, or send to, those leaders who cannot attend the meeting, for the same purpose.

(3.) To confer with the preachers and friends of the Circuit, if it should happen in any case that the amount received in the classes should fall below the quota chargeable on the Circuit, on the best method of making up that quota by any other means.

(4.) To remit the Circuit quota to a District-treasurer for the Auxiliary Fund, as is the case in reference to the Children's Fund, or else to remit it directly to the general treasurer, as may hereafter be determined, in the month of February at latest.

The sub-committee cannot but think, that if this plan be kindly, faithfully, and uniformly executed, the anticipated sum will be easily raised, in almost every Circuit, by the willing zeal and liberality of our members, without burdening or injuring the Circuit funds. Surely every member will feel it a duty and a privilege to testify his love for the Gospel and its ministers by the donation, in the way of a Christian's New-Year's Gift, to a fund whose claims are so righteous and irresistible, when those claims are explained and affectionately recommended.

VIII. It appeared to the sub-committee, that in order to afford sufficient time for maturing the plan, and carrying it into uniform and simultaneous operation,—as well as to avoid possible interference with the collection of the noble subscriptions already promised to the Centenary Fund,—the actual commencement of the contribution in the classes shall not be generally obligatory on the Circuits till the month of January, 1841, when all due preparations shall have been made. But, in order that the benefits of the plan may be realized, even in 1840, by then beginning to act upon the new scale of grants to annuitants, the Centenary Committee of Appropriation unanimously voted from their fund the liberal sum of £9,000, which, with the private subscriptions, will provide the additional outlay for the year 1840.

U, page 405.—Resolutions respecting Canada.

AFTER full consideration the committee agreed to recommend the following resolutions to the Conference :—

I. That the three allegations, or matters of complaint, contained in the resolutions of the committee on Canadian affairs, at their meeting on the 29th of April last, and forwarded by that committee to the Upper Canada Conference, are regarded as fully proved ; and that, after seriously considering the explanations and defence of the Rev. Egerton Ryerson and Rev. William Ryerson, the representatives of the Upper Canada Conference, or these points, and giving them the full weight to which they might be deemed to be entitled

the committee are decidedly of opinion that the representatives of the Upper Canada Conference have entirely failed to establish a justification; inasmuch as it appears that, notwithstanding all they have stated and explained, there existed,—

1. A practical superseding of the Rev. Joseph Stinson, as president, by communicating with the governor-general separately, and without his knowledge, and by acting without him, and without the committee of the Upper Canada Conference,—of which committee Mr. Stinson was a member, and chairman, (*ex officio*.)—on matters affecting the permanency of the Government grant to the Wesleyan Missionary Society.

2. A violation of the obligations arising from the union, in not opposing, but rather countenancing, the payment of our grant in a certain contingency, not to us, but to the Upper Canada Conference, for other and different purposes.

3. The decidedly and prominently political character of the “Christian Guardian,” in violation of pledges given to us and to the Upper Canada Conference from 1833 to 1839.

II. That after a most careful examination of the complicated and difficult subjects which have engaged the attention of the committee appointed by the British Conference of 1839 to decide finally in all matters relating to the union existing between the British Conference and the Upper Canada Conference, and to our Indian Missions in Upper Canada, and after having, in the course of a very protracted discussion, had abundant proof of the wisdom, care, and kindness which the aforesaid committee have manifested in relation to the affairs of Upper Canada, the present committee are unanimously of opinion that the members of the committee on Upper Canadian affairs, particularly in the resolutions adopted at their meeting in London, on Wednesday, April 29th, 1840, and transmitted to the Upper Canadian Conference, have strictly adhered to those great principles which have always guided the Wesleyan Body; and that they are therefore entitled to the thanks of the Conference for the important services which they have rendered to the common cause of Wesleyan Methodism.

III. After a close consideration of the resolutions of the Upper Canada Conference of 1840, in answer to the resolutions of our committee on Upper Canada affairs at their meeting on April 29th, 1840, it was resolved,—

1. That this committee is most happy to perceive that one of these resolutions, which determines that the “Christian Guardian” shall cease to be a political paper, and shall be confined to purely religious and literary subjects and articles of religious intelligence, is to that extent satisfactory; but that the unqualified reservation of the “Clergy-Reserve Question,”—a reservation already so construed and abused as to be pleaded in justification of an almost unlimited discussion of great and general principles on ecclesiastical polity, held sacred by this Body;—and the absence of any adequate security for a more faithful observance of this Resolution than has been maintained with respect to similar pledges repeatedly given from 1833 to 1839;—in connexion with the fact that a direct negative was simultaneously given to another series of Resolutions, which would have been much more explicit and satisfactory on the several subjects referred to;—are circumstances which the committee deeply regret, and cannot but regard with distrust and disapprobation.

2. That on the other important topics embraced in the resolutions of our committee on Upper Canada affairs, dated April 29th, 1840, the resolutions of the last Upper Canada Conference appear rather to imply an acquiescence in the evils complained of, and an official adoption of them, than a cordial determination to prevent their future recurrence by substantial and efficient measures; and seem to evince that there is a decided difference between the two Conferences on the construction of the articles of union, in reference to fundamental principles essential to the good working the union, and which the committee are of opinion that the British Conference cannot abandon without compromising its own consistency and public reputation, inasmuch as it cannot safely be identified in views and responsibility with any Body, however respected, over whose public proceedings it is denied the right and power of exerting any official influence, so as to secure a reasonable and necessary co-ordinate but efficient direction, during the continuance of the union.

IV. That, in the judgment of this committee, nothing has occurred, in the whole course

of these negotiations, to shake the confidence of the Conference in the Rev. Joseph Stinson and Rev. Matthew Richey; and that the members of the committee cannot but express their hearty esteem and approbation of the ability, fidelity, and diligence, with which these respected brethren have performed the duties officially confided to them.

V. That, notwithstanding the grounds of grievance and complaint on which the committee have felt it to be their duty to express so strong an opinion, they are aware of the desirableness of maintaining the existing union between the two Bodies, for reasons which relate to the general interests of our common Christianity, and to the continued connexion of the province with the mother country. Yet, in their judgment, that union can be advantageously maintained only by the strict and undeviating adherence of our Upper Canadian brethren to the following principles and regulations:—

1. That the continuation of the Government grant to the Wesleyan Missionary Society be cordially assented to and supported by our Upper Canadian brethren, even if its payment should be ultimately transferred, as proposed in the "Clergy-Reserve Bill," lately passed by the Imperial Parliament, from the casual and territorial revenue, on which it is now placed, to the clergy reserve fund in that province; and that, as it appears that the payment of the grant has actually been again suspended, and is at present withheld, to the great inconvenience and embarrassment of our missions in Upper Canada, the Rev. Egerton Ryerson shall address a letter to Lord John Russell, disclaiming any intention or wish to deprive the Wesleyan Missionary Society of the grant of seven hundred pounds per annum, secured to that Society as a fixed charge for missionary purposes in Upper Canada,—requesting that its regular payment may be continued,—and assuring his lordship that any other construction which may have been put upon his letter to the governor-in-chief, was founded in a misapprehension of his meaning.

2. That the "Christian Guardian," or whatever newspaper or periodical may in future be recognised as the official organ of the Upper Canadian Conference, shall entirely abstain from all party political reasonings and discussions, confining its expressions of opinion to religious and literary topics.

3. That such official organ admit and maintain all the acknowledged principles of the Wesleyan Methodist Connexion; and that, in seeking for a right understanding on this point, the committee have especial reference to that principle of our Body, which asserts it to be the duty of civil governments to employ their influence, and a portion of their resources, for the support of the Christian religion.

The committee recommend, in conclusion, that the Conference now remit the whole affair to the management of a special committee, whose duty it shall be to draw up a statement, in a more detailed manner, of the points on which full satisfaction will be expected from the Conference of Upper Canada, and to make such a report of the resolutions of that Body thereupon as may enable our next Conference, assembling in Manchester, to determine finally the course which, in reference to this union, it may then appear proper to adopt in the settlement of the whole affair.

On the whole subject, therefore, the Conference resolves unanimously,—

- I. That the first four resolutions contained in the preceding report of the committee, as those resolutions are revised and amended, be received and adopted by the Conference.

- II. That as, for the reasons above suggested, a perpetuation of the union between the British and Upper Canadian Conferences is judged to be impracticable, the fifth resolution contained in the aforesaid report, under all the circumstances in which the subject is now presented for the decision of the Conference, cannot be received and adopted; but that the following committee be appointed, with all the powers already mentioned, to take the most judicious and Christian measures, in conjunction with the Rev. Egerton Ryerson and Rev. William Ryerson, as representatives of the Upper Canadian Conference, that the formal dissolution of the union may not be accompanied with anything that might produce embittered feelings, or injure mutual charity; viz., the president and secretary of the Conference, the Rev. Messrs. Richard Reece, Richard Treffry, Thomas Jackson, John Scott, John P. Haswell, Edmund Grindrod, Thomas Galland, James Dixon, Joseph

Taylor, Peter M'Owan, Matthew Richey, Joseph Stinson, George Marsden, William Lord, Robert Wood, Barnard Slater, John Rigg, William Bennett, William M. Bunting, John Davis, Senior, John Bowers, William Atherton, Richard Waddy, Isaac Keeling, Timothy Ingle, John Mason, Junior, Samuel Jackson, William Vevors, Joseph Fowler, William Larton, Francis A. West, Samuel D. Waddy, together with the missionary secretaries.

III. That the above-named committee shall hold its first meeting in Manchester, on Wednesday, August 19th, next, and its subsequent meetings as may be found convenient or necessary.

X, page 466.—*Proceedings of the Conference in the Cases of the Rev. Messrs. Samuel Dunn and William Griffith, Jun.*

THE Conference, after repeated inquiries and careful deliberation at various stages of its annual session, in reference to the cases of Mr. Samuel Dunn and Mr. William Griffith, Jun., referred the same to a special committee, whose report, having been received and solemnly considered, was adopted as follows; viz.,—

It was stated, that certain questions were solemnly proposed in the Conference by the president to Samuel Dunn and William Griffith, Jun., which they contumaciously refused to answer. Yet, in conformity with the permission asked on their behalf, and granted to them by the Conference, these brethren were allowed to appear before the committee, for the purpose of stating anything which they might wish to say on the subject of their refusal to satisfy the Conference as to their innocence in the matter of the "Fly-Sheets." And besides being heard and conversed with at length upon that point, they were farther questioned and reasoned with, not only as to their past conduct, but also as to the security which they were prepared to give for their abstinence in future from the divisive and agitating measures which they have recently pursued. But nothing satisfactory was elicited. And their refusal to submit to the brotherly inquiry deemed by the Conference to be absolutely necessary for the explanation of their conduct in this business was peremptorily repeated.

The Committee, therefore, after the solemn and careful consideration of all the circumstances of each of these two cases, unanimously adopted the following conclusions:—

1. That the aggravated sin which has been committed in the Body by the repeated publication and avowed defence of the "Fly-Sheets," and the attempt which has been made to hide the authors and abettors of the evil under the veil of a concerted secrecy, have made it the imperative duty of the Conference to avail itself of its original, and constantly exercised, right of proposing such brotherly inquiries as it may deem necessary for its satisfaction, in reference to any of the brethren against whom there appears to be a reasonable and sufficient ground of doubt or suspicion.

2. That the course which has for some time past been pursued by Samuel Dunn and William Griffith, Jun., in their communications to the "Wesleyan Times,"—a paper notoriously hostile to the principles and interests of our Connexion,—and in the publication of the "Wesley Banner,"* as the organ of a small minority, avowedly designed, by means of appeals to the public, to "correct" the administration of Methodism,—thus attempting to supersede the authority of the District-meetings and of the Conference, to which any alleged grievance ought to be referred; together with the general sympathy which has been manifested on their part with the spirit and objects of the "Fly-Sheets," have furnished ample evidence of their having been deeply committed to that criminal agitation by which the authors of the "Fly-Sheets," and the "Wesleyan Times," in particular, have so wickedly endeavoured to subvert the original principles of the Connexion;—and that the Conference would therefore have been pre-eminently unfaithful both to them, and to its own solemn trust, if it had longer refrained, in these particular cases, from inquiries such as those to which they have been recently subjected.

3. That their declining, as they have done, to answer questions which were officially proposed to them in the Conference by the president, in a matter so gravely affecting their

* Mr. Griffith, in his interview with the committee, distinctly and spontaneously stated, that he was equally responsible with Mr. Dunn for the publication referred to.

religious and ministerial character, involves a contumacy on their part utterly at variance with their own original and constantly repeated pledges of attachment to the discipline of the Connexion, and equally at variance with the law of Christ, and which cannot be tolerated or connived at without the utmost hazard to the purity as well as to the peace of the Body.

4. That, under these circumstances, the following are, in the judgment of this committee, the only conditions on which the continuance of Samuel Dunn and William Griffith, Jun., in connexion with the Conference can be properly or safely recommended, or any thing like justice can be done to the true merits of the case, and the interests of the Connexion :—

First.—That they be reproved from the chair of the Conference, and be considered to be disqualified, at present, for being Circuit superintendents.

Second.—That they fully satisfy the Conference, if not as to their recent conduct in the matters in question, yet, at least, as it respects the course they will pursue in future ; and that, for this purpose, they give to the Conference an absolute and unequivocal pledge of their resolution at once to discontinue their publication of the “ Wesley Banner,” and their encouragement of other hostile and offensive publications ; and that they also pledge themselves to abstain from taking part, directly or indirectly, in any agitating and divisive proceedings, which may be pursued by others, either as to recent acts of discipline, or as to the settled principles and laws of the Connexion.

5. That failing these conditions they leave the Conference no alternative but that each of them be forthwith put away from being a member of the Conference, or in connexion therewith.

A copy of the above report was furnished to Mr. Dunn and Mr. Griffith respectively, and time was allowed them for the solemn and prayerful consideration which they were earnestly exhorted to give to a matter of so great importance.

By a joint letter to the president, which was read to the Conference at its next sitting, Mr. Dunn and Mr. Griffith stated they were *not* prepared to submit to the conditions on which their continued connexion with the Conference was made to depend. The Conference thereupon resolved, (Mr. Bromley being the only dissentient,) that, Mr. Samuel Dunn having stated in a letter to the president, that he is not prepared to submit to the conditions upon which the previous resolution in his case admitted of his remaining in connexion with the Conference, he be now solemnly expelled, and put away from being a member of the Conference, or in connexion therewith. It was then declared by the president, that Mr. Samuel Dunn is accordingly expelled, and put away from being a member of the Conference, or in connexion therewith.

A similar resolution was adopted, without a single dissentient, in the case of Mr. William Griffith, Jun., who was also officially declared to be accordingly expelled, and put away from being a member of the Conference, or in connexion therewith.

Y, page 481.—*Resolutions of the Conference of 1851 respecting the recent Agitations, and the Declaration of Lay Members of Society.*

RECENT AGITATIONS.

Q. XXXVII. WHAT is the opinion of the Conference with reference to certain DISCIPLINARY PROCEEDINGS which have been so largely made the occasion and pretext for the agitation and division of our Societies in various parts of the kingdom ?

A. 1. The Conference declares its unshaken conviction that those proceedings were not only justified by the circumstances of the case, but also absolutely necessary for the maintenance of purity in the body of its ministers, and for the conservation of the principles and rules of inquiry which have been from the beginning held to be essential for that purpose.

2. Considering, nevertheless, the extent to which the Connexion has suffered in various ways, from the attempts which have been made, under the pretence of “ Reform,” for the subversion of those principles and rules, and for other revolutionary objects, the Conference would regard the Divine permission of the evils so much to be lamented as a loud call, both on ministers and people, to faithful self-examination, and to earnest and united prayer.

3. Having, also, good reason to believe that a large proportion of those who have been alienated from connexion with us, have been drawn away by misrepresentations of the past, and by delusive assurances as to the future, the Conference affectionately calls upon all those who have been thus misled to consider, calmly and religiously, the origin, character, and necessary tendency of the course which the agitators have adopted and are still pursuing; and, at the same time, charges it on all its ministers, and recommends 't to all others remaining in connexion with them, to endeavour with all long-suffering and gentleness to correct the misunderstandings which exist as to the facts of the whole case, and so to recover those who have been unhappily deluded.

4. With a view to the general revival and promotion of the great spiritual objects for which Methodism was first brought into existence, the Conference expresses its earnest hope that both ministers and people will abstain, as much as possible, from any thing that would divert their minds and efforts from those objects, under whatever guise it may solicit their attention; and will be led, under a deepened sense of their responsibility to Christ and to His cause, to "follow," with greater earnestness of spirit, "after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another."

DECLARATION OF LAY MEMBERS OF THE METHODIST SOCIETIES.

THE subjoined DECLARATION was voluntarily prepared, and transmitted to the Conference, by a large number of the most respectable laymen of our Connexion, who, at the request of the late president, met him in Manchester, on Wednesday, July 16th, in order to afford him the information which he had solicited as to the general views and feelings of our people on the subject of the late agitations, and on the general state of the Connexion:—

WE, the undersigned officers and members of the Wesleyan-Methodist Society, having been convened by the president of the Conference for the purpose of conferring with him, in friendly conversation, upon various subjects affecting the general interests of the Connexion at the present time, embrace the opportunity of expressing our sentiments on the following subjects.

I. We deeply deplore the measures which have been adopted for the avowed purpose of agitating the various Societies forming our Connexion; measures by which many thousands of our members have been separated from us, and the character of the Body has been injured; and we declare our conviction that the aspersions which have been cast upon the Conference are false and calumnious.

II. We state it as our deliberate and conscientious opinion, that it is the imperative duty of the Connexion faithfully and steadfastly to adhere to the great and long-established principles of Wesleyan Methodism, and more particularly to those which respect the constitution of the Conference, which secure our connexional union, which provide for the due exercise of the powers of the pastoral office, and which guarantee the purity and efficiency of the Christian ministry, by confiding to the Conference the care of its own members.

III. We most cheerfully and entirely confide in the wisdom, integrity, and liberality of the Conference; and we respectfully request an early consideration of such of the suggestions made at the present meeting, in reference to the rules of the Body, as the Conference may consider best adapted to meet the present and future circumstances of the Connexion, and to carry out into more effectual and extensive operation those tried principles of Wesleyan Methodism, every departure from which we most sincerely deprecate.

The following resolutions on the subject of this Declaration were unanimously adopted:—

I. The Conference receives with lively satisfaction and gratitude this spontaneous expression of the steadfast attachment of so large a number of valued friends, in various parts of the kingdom, "to the great and long-established principles of Wesleyan Methodism;" and directs that it be inserted in the printed Minutes.

II. The Conference assures the brethren who have signed this Declaration of its solemn and unabated concern to maintain the purity of Christian doctrine and practice, as the most effectual and important means of promoting true godliness in our community. This

highest of all its duties it has, from the beginning, endeavoured to discharge with integrity and fidelity, combined with all needful tenderness; and it will continue to do so, uninfluenced by the obloquy and misrepresentation which its endeavours may occasion; remembering that the same afflictions which its members endure have been accomplished in their predecessors in the ministry from the beginning.

III. The Conference, having received this important communication at a period of its session which would not admit of a full and detailed consideration of the suggestions spoken of in it, refers the document to the committee on memorials, with an instruction to take such suggestions, as far as they can be collected and preserved, into their careful consideration, and report thereon to the next Conference.

IV. The Conference presents its cordial and respectful acknowledgments to those gentlemen who have prepared and so extensively signed this Declaration. It fully appreciates the value and importance of their testimony in favour of those principles and institutions which have been of late so wickedly assailed, and reciprocates those expressions of confidence and kindness which the document contains; and further expresses its devout hope and prayer, that, by the blessing of God upon the united labours of ministers and people during the ensuing year, a gratifying result may be realized in the revival and extension of the work of God.

LIST OF THE CONFERENCES,

WITH THE

PRESIDENTS AND SECRETARIES,

FROM THE

DEATH OF WESLEY.

CONFERENCE TOWN.	YEAR.	PRESIDENT.	SECRETARY.
Manchester	1791	William Thompson	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
London	1792	Alexander Mather	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Leeds	1793	John Pawson	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Bristol.....	1794	Thomas Hanby	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Manchester	1795	Joseph Bradford	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
London	1796	Thomas Taylor	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Leeds	1797	Thomas Coke, LL.D.	Samuel Bradburn
Bristol.....	1798	Joseph Benson	Samuel Bradburn
Manchester	1799	Samuel Bradburn	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
London	1800	James Wood	Samuel Bradburn
Leeds	1801	John Pawson (2nd)	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Bristol.....	1802	Joseph Taylor	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Manchester	1803	Joseph Bradford (2nd)	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
London	1804	Henry Moore	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Sheffield	1805	Thomas Coke, LL.D. (2nd)	Joseph Benson
Leeds	1806	Adam Clarke, M.A.	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Liverpool	1807	John Barber	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Bristol.....	1808	James Wood (2nd)	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Manchester	1809	Thomas Taylor (2nd)	Joseph Benson
London	1810	Joseph Benson (2nd)	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Sheffield	1811	Charles Atmore	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Leeds	1812	Joseph Entwisle	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Liverpool.....	1813	Walter Griffith	Thomas Coke, LL.D.
Bristol.....	1814	Adam Clarke, LL.D. (2nd)	Jabez Bunting
Manchester	1815	John Barber (2nd)	Jabez Bunting
London	1816	Richard Reece	Jabez Bunting
Sheffield	1817	John Gaulter	Jabez Bunting
Leeds	1818	Jonathan Edmondson	Jabez Bunting
Bristol.....	1819	Jonathan Crowther	Jabez Bunting
Liverpool.....	1820	Jabez Bunting, M.A.	George Marsden

CONFERENCE TOWN.	YEAR.	PRESIDENT.	SECRETARY.
Manchester	1821	George Marsden	Robert Newton
London	1822	Adam Clarke, LL.D. (3rd)	Robert Newton
Sheffield	1823	Henry Moore (2nd)	Robert Newton
Leeds	1824	Robert Newton	Jabez Bunting
Bristol.....	1825	Joseph Entwisle (2nd)	Jabez Bunting, M.A.
Liverpool.....	1826	Richard Watson	Jabez Bunting, M.A.
Manchester	1827	John Stephens	Jabez Bunting, M.A.
London	1828	Jabez Bunting, M.A. (2nd)	Robert Newton
Sheffield	1829	James Townley, D.D.	Robert Newton
Leeds	1830	George Morley	Robert Newton
Bristol.....	1831	George Marsden	Robert Newton
Liverpool.....	1832	Robert Newton (2nd)	Edmund Grindrod
Manchester	1833	Richard Treffry	Edmund Grindrod
London	1834	Joseph Taylor	Robert Newton
Sheffield	1835	Richard Reece (2nd)	Robert Newton
Birmingham.....	1836	Jabez Bunting, D.D. (3rd)	Robert Newton
Leeds	1837	Edmund Grindrod	Robert Newton
Bristol.....	1838	Thomas Jackson	Robert Newton
Liverpool.....	1839	Theophilus Lessey	Robert Newton
Newcastle-on Tyne	1840	Robert Newton (3rd)	John Hannah
Manchester	1841	James Dixon	John Hannah, D.D.
London	1842	John Hannah, D.D.	Robert Newton
Sheffield	1843	John Scott	Robert Newton
Birmingham.....	1844	Jabez Bunting, D.D. (4th)	Robert Newton, D.D.
Leeds	1845	Jacob Stanley	Robert Newton, D.D.
Bristol.....	1846	William Atherton	Robert Newton, D.D.
Liverpool.....	1847	Samuel Jackson	Robert Newton, D.D.
Hull	1848	Robert Newton (4th)	Joseph Fowler
Manchester	1849	Thomas Jackson (2nd)	John Hannah, D.D.
London	1850	John Beecham, D.D.	John Hannah, D.D.
Newcastle-on-Tyne	1851	John Hannah, D.D. (2nd)	John Farrar
Sheffield	1852	John Scott (2nd)	John Farrar
Bradford	1853	John Lomas	John Farrar
Birmingham.....	1854	John Farrar	John Hannah, D.D.
Leeds	1855	Isaac Keeling	John Hannah, D.D.
Bristol.....	1856	Robert Young	John Hannah, D.D.
Liverpool.....	1857	Francis A. West	John Hannah, D.D.
Hull	1858	John Bowers	John Hannah, D.D.
Manchester	1859	Samuel D. Waddy	John Farrar
London	1860	William W. Stamp	John Farrar
Newcastle-on-Tyne	1861	John Rattenbury	John Farrar

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